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ROYAL COMMISSION

ON

AGRICULTURE.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

(26th August, 1919, to 3rd September, 1919).

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ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE.

TERMS OF REFERENCE.

"To enquire into the economic prospects of the agricultural industry in Great Britain, with special reference to the adjustment of a balance between the prices of agricultural commodities, the costs of production, the remuneration of labour, and hours of employment."

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MR. W. R. SMITH, M.P.
MR. R. B. WALKER.

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MR. R. S. LANGFORD }

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE.

SEVENTH DAY,

TUESDAY, 26TH AUGUST, 1919.

PRESENT:

SIR WILLIAM BARCLAY PEAT (*Chairman*).

SIR WILLIAM JAMES ASHLEY.
DR. C. M. DOUGLAS, C.B.
MR. G. G. REA, C.B.E.
MR. W. ANKER SIMMONS, C.B.F.
MR. HENRY OVERMAN, O.B.E.
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MR. E. H. PARKER.
MR. R. R. ROBBINS.
MR. W. R. SMITH, M.P.
MR. R. B. WALKER.

MR. ALBERT BUCKLE, Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture, called and examined.

4960. *Chairman*: You are the representative of the Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture?—That is so.

4961. You have put in certain statements, which perhaps you will allow me to incorporate in the day's proceedings, without reading them?—Yes.

(*Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.*)

4962. (1) I am of opinion that in order to ensure increased production of agricultural produce a guaranteed minimum price for cereals and other agricultural commodities must be given, as with the prevailing and ever-increasing high wages, the poorer lands will not pay for cultivating, and the tendency will be, and undoubtedly is, at the present time for this class of land to revert to grass. If a guarantee of 70s. per quarter were given for wheat and other cereals in proportion, I think this would be a wise policy as it would encourage farmers to keep their land under the plough and to grow all they possibly could.

(2) At the present time farmers are suffering most from shortage of labour, and from this cause cannot get the best out of their land, the larger farmer being in a better position than the small one as he can take advantage of up-to-date machinery.

With regard to the dairying branch of farming were it not for the assistance we get from the women who have been trained to this work, I am certain many of us could not carry on, shorter hours and half holidays being entirely unsuited to the industry.

(3) The policy also of the Ministry of Food in encouraging farmers in the outlying districts to sell milk in preference (as was their custom in the past) to making butter and cheese, is having a most detrimental effect upon our herds as it was their custom to rear their calves on the separated milk. This system is impossible when the whole of the milk is sold off.

Dairy farming is the most arduous of all branches of farming and should be the best paid, otherwise many will go out of the business.

(4) *System of Cropping in Cleveland.*

A four course system of cropping is practised on the major portion of Cleveland, *i.e.*, fallow or roots, wheat or barley, clover, oats; in some cases beans following wheat instead of clover.

On the lighter lands and near the towns a 6 course is sometimes taken, *i.e.*, potatoes, wheat, turnips, barley or oats, clover, oats.

The Dales farms are mostly worked on a 3 course system; temporary seeds are sown to lay 4 to 6 years followed by oats, roots or fallow, barley or mixed crop to be seeded down again.

(5) *Cost of 1 acre wheat after fallow.*

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates (2 years)	3	0	0
Four times ploughing at 25s.	5	0	0
Three times cultivating at 8s.	1	4	0
Ten tons farmyard manure at 10s. ...	5	0	0
Three times harrowing and drilling ...	0	10	0
Two bushels seed	1	0	0
Spring harrowing and rolling	0	5	0
Weeding	0	2	0
Harvesting and marketing	2	2	0
	£18	3	0
Less 25 cwts. straw at £2 10s.	3	2	6
Estimated yield 4 quarters cost = ...	£15	0	6

Note.—It may be well to point out, that though the cost of an acre of wheat is very high after fallow, yet the advantages are apparent through the whole course of cropping.

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(6) *Cost of* 1 *acre clover for* 1 *year's lay.*

	£	s.	d.
Seed	2	5	0
Sowing and rolling	0	6	0
Ten cwt. basic slag and sowing	2	5	0
One cwt. sulphate and sowing	0	18	0
Rolling and stone gathering	0	3	6
Cutting, stacking, &c.	1	10	0
Rent and rates	1	10	0
	£8	17	6
Value of grazing	1	0	0
Average yield 1 ton cost =	£7	17	6

Note.—This is taken as an average of seeds that stand. There are many instances of seeds not taking.

(7) *Cost of* 1 *acre oats.*

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	1	10	0
Ploughing	1	5	0
Three harrowings before drilling	0	9	9
Drilling and harrowing	0	6	0
Seed	1	10	0
Two rollings	0	5	0
Weeding	0	4	0
Three cwt. supers. and sowing	1	3	6
One cwt. sulphate and sowing	0	18	0
Harvesting and marketing	2	2	0
	£9	13	3
15 cwt. straw at	2	0	0
Average yield 4 quarters cost =	£7	13	3

(8) *Cost of* 1 *acre turnips.*

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	1	15	0
Three ploughings	3	15	0
Fifteen tons manure at 10s.	7	10	0
Ten cwt. basic slag and sowing	2	5	0
One cwt. sulphate and sowing	0	18	0
Three times cultivating, two rollings	2	0	0
Ridging	0	6	3
Seed and sowing	0	11	0
Rolling	0	2	0
Four times scuffling	0	8	0
Twice hoeing	1	10	0
Pulling	1	0	0
Carting to pit	1	12	0
Pitting and straw	0	10	0
Carting into turnip house	1	0	0
Yield ten tons per acre, cost =	£25	2	3

Note.—It is feared that with the continued drought the yield this year will only be about half this estimate.

(9) *Cost of* 1 *acre potatoes.*

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	1	15	0
Three ploughings	3	15	0
Two cultivatings, two scufflings	1	4	0
Two rowings	0	12	6
Twenty loads farmyard manure at 10s.	10	0	0
Three cwts. supers and sowing	1	3	6
One cwt. sulphate and sowing	0	18	0
Seed	10	0	0
Planting	0	15	0
Manure spreading	0	10	0
Rolling and harrowing	0	6	0
Three scufflings	0	12	0
Hoeing	0	10	0
Ridging	0	6	3
Digging	0	10	0
Gathering	2	0	0
Carting off and pitting	1	10	0
Straw	0	12	0
Sorting five tons at 8s	2	0	0
Marketing	1	5	0
Average yield per acre five tons, cost =	£40	4	3

Note.—It should be pointed out that the manure applied above should be sufficient for the succeeding crop, and therefore a proportion (say one-third) of the cost should be charged to that crop.

(10) *Cost of* 1 *acre wheat after potatoes.*

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	1	15	0
Ploughing	1	5	0
Twice harrowing, 1 cultivating	0	13	0
Drilling and harrowing	0	6	0
2 bushels seed and dressing	1	1	0
Harrowing and rolling	0	5	0
Weeding	0	5	0
Harvesting and marketing	2	2	0
Manures (one third applied to potatoes)	4	0	6
	11	12	6
Less 20 cwt. straw	2	10	0
Average yield per acre 4 qrs. cost =	£9	2	6

(This concludes the evidence-in-chief.)

The Chairman: I will ask Dr. Douglas to begin questions in regard to the evidence that you have been kind enough to put in, and which has been circulated to the Commissioners.

4963. *Dr. Douglas*: Your first photograph is as to land which has not paid for cultivation under present conditions. Are you referring to land which was cultivated 5 or 6 years ago, before the war?—Yes, I am to a great extent.

4964. You are not referring only to the additional land brought under cultivation during the war?—If it is really strong clay land. There are some cases where very strong clay land has been ploughed out, but not many in our district. It would apply equally to that as to the land which has been under the plough.

4965. You are referring to land which was formerly under cultivation?—Yes.

4966. So that you mean the standard of cultivation would be apt to fall below the 1914 level?—Yes; I mean the cost of production would be too great for that land.

4967. Is that tendency actually showing itself in the operations of the present season?—Undoubtedly. I have heard of numbers of fields that have been laid back to grass or put to grass; fields that have not been in grass previously.

4968. You are not merely making conjectures about the future. You tell us that is actually happening already?—That is so.

4969. You suggest a guarantee of 70s. a quarter. You are referring to a guarantee under the administrative methods of the Corn Production Act, are not you?—Yes.

4970. Can you tell us what you have in your mind when you quote the figure of 70s.?—I think that on many lands you will get greater production; I mean it will give a stimulus to the farmer. If he knows that he has a guarantee of 70s., it will encourage him to keep his land under the plough, and to grow wheat.

4971. You are telling us really of this figure as one which you think would affect the opinion of the farmer; you are not basing it on any definite or accurate costings or account keeping, are you?—No; it is what I consider to be a figure which would induce a farmer, if he knew he had this guarantee, to grow wheat; I mean if that were a minimum.

4972. I suppose, if there were no such guarantee and cultivation were reduced the farmers would still make their business quite profitable in other ways?—Possibly; by putting their land back to grass.

4973. So that you do not think it is necessary merely for the profits of the farmer, that he should have this guarantee, but you think it necessary in order to induce him to carry on his business by cultivation rather than by grazing?—Yes; I think it is in the national interests that it should be so.

4974. From that point of view?—Yes.

4975. In your second paragraph you speak of the shortage of labour. You think that that is greatest so far as the largest farmers are concerned in relation to dairying?—Yes, I think so.

4976. Have you many small farms in your district?—Not a great many. I survey about 80 farms, and they average something like 150 acres.

4977. Have you any considerable proportion of farms on which the labour is done chiefly by the holder and his family without hired labour?—Yes, there is a fair number.

4978. Does the labour difficulty arise on those farms at all?—Not to such a great extent.

4979. I suppose in purely arable work the larger farmer is compensated by being able to use more machinery?—Yes, I think he has the advantage there.

4980. In dairying there is not the great compensation, is there?—No, I do not think so. I do not think the machinery in dairying is very satisfactory up to the present.

4981. The milking machine has not made great progress in your district?—No. I have one myself, but I am not particularly struck with it.

4982. But in relation to dairying, you say the labour difficulty is very great. Has it been the habit in your district to employ women to any large extent in dairying?—It has been during this war-time.

4983. But not before the war?—No, not so much.

4984. Do you think that will continue after the war?—Personally I do not think under the hours that are at present fixed, you will get men or youths to do it. We have only got the women to fall back upon.

4985. What hours are you referring to?—The Saturday half-day holiday and so forth.

4986. Does that regular Saturday half-day holiday obtain in dairy work?—In many cases we pay higher wages in lieu of their having the Saturday half-day.

4987. Do you make any other arrangement for giving leisure to dairy workers?—We let them take it alternately; possibly, instead of giving them a a regular half-day, you give them a day or a week-end when they wish.

4988. In your third paragraph you speak of the policy of the Ministry of Food as having discouraged calf rearing. You refer to the relative prices of milk and butter?—Yes.

4989. Do you find that that has stopped the practice altogether of feeding calves on separated milk?—Not absolutely altogether.

4990. You sell a certain amount of butter?—There is very little butter sold now. I was speaking to a farmer out Wensleydale way, who tells me they are nearly all selling their milk his way in preference to butter making and calf rearing.

4991. Do you say that the number of calves reared in your district has diminished?—I think in those districts it has—not particularly in my district. In the Dales and in the more outlying districts, most certainly it has.

4992. On account of the high price of milk and the relatively lower price of butter?—Yes, that is so.

4993. But is not it still profitable when people wish to rear calves, to use separated milk as a substitute?—You cannot use separated milk if you sell the whole of the milk.

4994. No; but you can sell certain proportions of milk as cream or butter?—I think if a man goes into the business he prefers to sell it all; he does not carry on the two branches.

4995. They used to employ it all in butter making?—Yes, in many cases.

4996. You say something at the end of that paragraph about dairy farming being the most arduous of all branches of farming, which at all events in the case of arable dairying it no doubt is, but you say that it should be the best paid. Have you any suggestions to make about that? Can you suggest anything of a practical kind with regard to it?—What I mean is, that we should have a fair profit for producing.

4997. Are you referring merely to the present controlled prices, or to something else?—Yes, I am referring to the present controlled prices.

4998. And to those only?—Yes, I think so; or as to what may take place in the future with regard to control.

4999. That is to say, you think any continuation of control beyond what is absolutely necessary in the national interests, would have an adverse effect upon dairy production?—Yes, I do think so. I think there are many other ways. I mean a farmer can sell his produce or produce beef and make a better profit than in dairying, with less labour to himself.

5000. But you are not advocating any special State guarantee or anything of that kind in relation to production?—Personally, I think it would be better from a national standpoint that milk should be decontrolled, and that we should have a free market.

5001. That is the point you are dealing with?—Yes. It might have the effect of raising prices a little just at first, but I think the increased production would very soon take place. The farmers would have greater confidence. Under this control you do not get it controlled far enough forward. You never know from month to month what to expect. We did not know what to expect for the month of August. We got the 4d. rise for July, and then it was taken off for August, when the conditions in our district were considerably worse.

5002. So that you put it to us that the control is having an adverse effect on milk production?—Certainly I do think so.

5003. Do you tell us that there are cases of people who are giving up dairying?—Yes.

5004. Are actually disposing of their herds?—Yes, I know of several in my own district.

5005. Are dairy cows maintaining their price in your district?—Yes. They have been slightly lower this last month since the 4d. was taken off.

5006. But on the whole they have not fallen very much in price?—No; until the 4d. was taken off, then there was a drop in price.

5007. Can you explain, if that is the case, why you think that people are giving up dairying?—It is chiefly on account of the labour and the hours.

5008. No. I mean can you explain if people are giving up dairying why is it the case that dairy cows are maintaining their price?—I suppose there is a great scarcity of cows, and there will be a greater scarcity through the slaughter of calves.

5009. You speak of the system of cropping in Cleveland. You speak of a four-course system as practised. That is not continuous, is it? You have a period of temporary grass between these courses, have not you?—No, not on the greater portion.

5010. There is no grass in that rotation at all?—There is the clover crop.

5011. One clover crop; that is all?—Yes.

5012. On land of that class, is not that a very costly way of producing?—I do not think so.

5013. There are only one or two points I want to put to you on your costing figures. In paragraph 8 you put in 10 tons an acre as the average or normal production of roots. What was your estimate based upon?—At the time, on this year's crop.

5014. You say on account of the continued drought the yield will be only about half this estimate. You are referring to the 10 tons estimate?—That is so.

5015. Is that your normal production?—No, certainly not.

5016. What is your average or ordinary production of roots?—I should say anything from 10 to 15 tons.

5017. Do you grow chiefly turnips, swedes, or what?—Swedes and turnips.

5018. Not mangolds?—Yes, a few mangolds, but not many.

5019. Does not that seem to you to be a very low production?—It is not turnip land in Cleveland; it is strong land mostly.

5020. But in the case of potatoes, is your average yield just 5 tons?—Yes.

5021. You take that simply as an average over a number of years?—Yes.

5022. Is that based on figures that you have taken, or is it just conjecture?—It is based on my own farm and the opinions of others I have spoken to.

5023. It really refers to what you have been able to sell off your farm over a period of years?—Yes.

5024. Then in your costs you have allowed the manure applied to the turnip and potato crops to be partly charged to the succeeding crop?—That is so.

5025. Is that the case with any of the other of your manurings?—It applies, I suppose, to a great extent to nearly every crop. That is where the difficulty comes in, in really estimating the actual cost of any crop.

5026. Quite so; but you have not really given effect to that as between the different crops in succession?—No, not so much as after the root crop.

5027. *Mr. Rea*: To go back for a minute to the question of the guarantee which you think should be 70s. a quarter, do you name that as being one which would leave a profit to the farmer?—Yes; I think it would encourage him to continue the cultivation of his land.

5028. But do you think that if the country is asked to guarantee a minimum, it should be such a minimum as would in itself pay the farmer, or only one which would guard him against the heavy loss such as there was in the nineties, and let him trust to favourable markets in other years to make his profit?—Yes, that was my idea. Of course, a great deal depends upon what is done. With regard to labour, the cost of labour has gone up tremendously, and we get fresh orders about every few weeks. What is a paying price to-day might not be next year at this time.

5029. No; but of course you realise that the country would not willingly guarantee a higher price than it is forced to do. The point we are aiming at is, to get a guarantee which would safeguard the farmer against heavy loss, but not necessarily to give him a profit on that individual crop, if the market price over a term of 3 or 4 years was higher on the average. Do you think that 70s. is a sum which could be supported on those grounds?—Yes, I think so—if I heard your question aright.

5030. I asked you whether you thought that 70s. in itself left a profit, or whether it was only a sum which would induce the farmer to grow because he would not make a heavy loss on the minimum?—I do not think it wants to be a maximum; I think it should be a minimum.

5031. And you would not recommend a lower minimum?—No, I would not.

5032. With regard to the paragraph which Dr. Douglas asked you about as to half-holidays, you rather laid emphasis on the Saturday half-holiday. You realise that there is nothing making the Saturday half-holiday compulsory; it is simply a half-holiday owing to the fact that the hours worked must not be in excess of 6½ on one day of the week, not being a Sunday?—Yes, I am quite aware of that.

5033. Cannot you change your milkers and give them a half-holiday on one day and some on another?—On the great majority of farms you have horsemen and stockmen. If you let your cowman go and a horseman has to take his place on the Wednesday, a horseman has to take his place or your horse is standing. That is our difficulty.

5034. I was referring to what you said, that you were depending principally upon women?—Yes; that is to keep the horses going.

5035. If you have the women, could not you change them?—We are rather under-staffed altogether in Cleveland. That is rather the difficulty. In some cases, say, you have three or four employed amongst the cows. They have one half-day each some day during the week.

5036. Probably as a matter of fact the people themselves like to have it on the same day?—As a matter of fact, with the wages the women are now getting, they do not want their half-holiday at all; they prefer not to have it; they would rather work at overtime rate.

5037. They would rather work the half-day?—Yes.

5038. Then with regard to the question of rearing calves, Cleveland was formerly a large calf rearing district in certain parts, was it not?—In certain parts—what I term the Dales; in the hilly districts.

5039. Is their position such that they can now run a new milk trade; I mean is it near enough to the markets?—Yes, that is so; they are selling their milk to the towns.

5040. They are within reach?—Yes.

5041. Have you considered the question from their own point of view of profit, whether the price of butter plus the profit they make on the calves, would or would not be as great as the profit they make from the sale of new milk?—No; they would make much more on the milk.

5042. I was thinking of the farms that are run by the farmer and his family, where the labour would be in the house. Calf rearing is a profitable industry there, is not it?—Not so much as milk selling. I mean, take a pound of butter at 2s. 3d.; that, I suppose, takes about 3 gallons of milk to make; whereas in the winter we were getting 2s. 3d. a gallon for the milk, and at the present time it is 1s. 8d. a gallon.

5043. I suppose the price of store cattle at present is very high?—Yes; but still, in my opinion, they consider they get better paid by selling the milk. Besides, they are given advantages; I mean the buyer has railway carriage to pay. That is another point which I never could get quite cleared up with the Ministry of Food. Some of us, like myself, live about 7 miles out of Middlesbrough; and for the convenience of the buyer, I take my milk by road, whereas I could put it on rail within a mile and charge the carriage to him, but I am not allowed to do that.

5044. Then, again, they get a quicker return than they would from calf rearing?—That is so.

5045. With regard to your rotation, this four-course system does not seem to give very big crops. You only estimate 4 quarters an acre for oats. Is there any practice in the district of extending the course and letting the clover lay for two or three years, and then ploughing it up again?—In the Dales there is. You will see that I have a paragraph on that.

5046. Yes; I see that in the Dales; but I mean this other land where the close cropping means a lot of labour and the crops do not seem very good. If the grass or the clover laid two or three years, it would be a saving of labour, and I should think it would get a greatly increased crop of oats?—In many cases where land is laid for a few years, there is great trouble with the wire worm.

5047. Is there in a short time such as 2 or 3 years?—Yes, there is; and of course during this war time we have not been allowed to leave it laying.

5048. No; but we are looking forward to the future, and a crop of 8 qrs. of oats, say, after a good crop of clover would be as good as two crops of 4 quarters. You know better whether your land would be likely to suit that?—I do not think, except on the very strongest portion, it is advisable to leave any ley. I have a portion myself laid for the second year of wild white clover. At the present time white clover is almost unobtainable and at a tremendous price.

5049. If it gives 2 quarters an acre profit afterwards it pays, besides the extra grazing?—I think myself that is too high an estimate; I do not think you would get that.

5050. It does on some land, and more than that?—You get a very poor crop the second time; you get no second crop. We get a second crop with the 1 year's lay. You get no second cut with the wild white clover.

5051. How much of the 10 tons of farm yard manure applied to the wheat would you carry forward?—I certainly think a portion of that should go forward to the next crop.

5052. Half of it?—No, not half.

5053. Not so much; more than half will be exhausted?—Yes, undoubtedly. I should say about one-third—the same as I did with the potato crop.

5054. Then as to the root crop, you say it is not a suitable district for root growing?—We do not grow big root crops in Cleveland.

5055. It cannot be, because of the yield?—But this year is an exception; they are really very bad. I was through a large part of Cleveland about a week ago and half the land is practically bare, and the other thin.

5056. But I thought you said that in normal years from 10 to 15 tons an acre was all you got?—I think that is the average of Cleveland, certainly.

5057. Have you thought of silage instead of roots on that land?—No.

5058. *Mr. Anker Simmons*: What is the average rent in your neighbourhood?—I should say from 30s. to 35s. per acre.

5059. What is the proportion of arable and pasture generally?—I should say somewhere about half. On those farms which I surveyed two years ago, they averaged just about half.

5060. What is your custom on entry with regard to the payment for hay, straw and manure?—The incoming tenant takes the hay and straw at consuming value.

5061. And the manure for labour?—Yes, he gets the manure that has been made during the last year of tenancy.

5062. I notice in your cost of production of wheat, you put your farmyard manure at market price?—Yes; it cost a good deal more to produce now with cakes and roots at the price they are at present.

5063. Yes; but if the custom is that the farmer enters at the consuming price, I take it his agreement would provide that if he did sell off anything in the way of hay or straw, he would have to bring back the equivalent of manurial value?—Yes, that is so.

5064. You have made no allowance for that in your estimate of the cost of production of an acre of wheat or an acre of anything else. You see if you take your cost of production of an acre of turnips, you have no less than £7 10s. an acre for farmyard manure?—Yes.

5065. If I were valuing on that farm, which you put at 15 tons, I should only allow you the cost of carting the manure on to the land and spreading it?—Surely it costs something to produce. You are not changing farms every year.

5066. No; but you cannot have it both ways. If you are only entitled to a consuming price, what we have to get at here is, as near as we can, the average cost of production of a crop, and therefore we must go right through. There are some districts where everything is at the market price. Personally, I wish that was the custom everywhere, as it would be much fairer. But I take it in your district that is not so, and it would not really cost a farmer £25 an acre to produce an acre of turnips?—We took it as nearly as we thought was the value of the farmyard manure.

5067. Of course, all your figures, I take it, are estimates, and not taken from an actual cost basis or account keeping basis?—No; they are estimates. I mean I do not see how you can get it in any other way than by an estimate.

5068. We have had witnesses before us who have been keeping accounts for some time on the new system of actual cost of production, booking up the number of hours of the men and the horses which were employed in each field?—We have certainly not done that.

5069. Then with regard to the cost of production of an acre of wheat. You give us, very fairly, two examples. You give us the cost of production after fallow which would be the most expensive; and you give us the cost of production after potatoes, which would be the least expensive. So that if you put the two together and divide them, you get a fair average of the cost of production which, not deducting for the straw, would give you an average in round figures of £15 an acre?—Yes, something like that.

5070. Then you say you grow four quarters to the acre and you suggest 70s. as a guarantee. Putting your straw at £3, that would give you £17 an acre for your produce. That would only give you a margin of £2 an acre profit?—Yes, that is so.

5071. May I take it that four quarters is an average crop of wheat? Would not you grow more than four quarters after bare fallow?—No. I have been told on many hands that I put it too high at four quarters.

5072. I should have thought arable land rented at 30s. an acre ought to be capable of producing on a high farming principle like this, a four course system, nine sacks?—I think it is beyond the mark, the four quarters this year; and on the average I think it is quite enough.

5073. Of course we cannot take any one particular year. I am aware that this year is a bad year, although it is not a particularly bad year for wheat; wheat is the best crop of all. We must take it on an average of years. Then may we take it from you that I would be safe in calculating your average yield would be about four quarters to the acre?—Yes, I think is quite enough.

5074. I am rather struck with the cost of production of an acre of turnips. Of course, if you take off the very heavy item for manure which is produced on the farm, even then you get £18 an acre, which would appear to be a very high sum and far in excess of the general average. I see you estimate £1 12s. an acre to cart to the pit, and another £1 to cart back again into the turnip house?—Yes.

5075. I take it as a rule if you cart to a pit mangolds or any root that you are going to use for cattle, you would not, of course, cart your turnips, because you would probably feed them off with your sheep?—No, we do not in our district at all. There is very little of that done in Cleveland.

5076. You first cart the whole of your roots to a pit, and re-cart them into a shed where the cattle are?—Not absolutely the whole. You would fill your turnip house at the beginning of the season, and the rest would go to the pit to be re-carted again into the turnip house.

5077. One is anxious not to get exaggerated figures; and I should have thought when you were carting your roots to the field the first thing you would do would be, as you say, to fill up your root house, and you would put the other roots in close proximity to your root house so that it would be a very simple matter. I mean the man with the odd horse and the odd cart would keep your root house going, and that would not cost anything like as much as the whole thing getting from the field?—That is what we do. A man with the odd horse and cart carts them in.

5078. Under those circumstances you might cut down that last item of £1 easily by half?—I do not know. You do not get very much work done for £1 nowadays

5079. Just a word or two with regard to milk. I do not want to ask questions that do not come within our limits; but I would like to know from you definitely whether you would be opposed to any State control of milk-selling or production?—Yes; I think it is in the national interest that we should have a free market.

5080. Do you think if there were a free market for milk to-day that the price would be higher or lower than it is at this moment?—It is possible that for a short time it might be higher; but I think that the supply would increase and would eventually bring down prices.

5081. You complained just now that very short notice was given by the Ministry of Food of the change of price?—That is so.

5082. You are aware, surely, that that 4d., which was put on in June, was a sum given to the farmer to make up for the loss sustained owing to the drought?—That is so; but the drought was more acute in August than in July.

5083. Yes, but I want this made clear. It was estimated that 2d. for two months would probably meet the matter, but it was easier in the interests of administration to have 4d. for one month, because any sum less than 4d. over a gallon makes it difficult to divide when you get down to pints and half-pints, and so on?—I see. It would have been better if that had been explained at the time. It caused great dissatisfaction amongst the producers when the price came down in August.

5084. When a witness of your standing comes here, I do not want you to be under any misapprehension. You complained that you were not allowed to be paid for taking your milk seven miles. How far from the nearest station are you?—A mile.

5085. If you studied the Milk Order, I think you would find that any distance you carted your milk over that mile you would be allowed to charge for?—The Order says distinctly not; that the price is fixed at the seller's station or the buyer's premises.

5086. I think you will find that what you would be entitled to make some charge for, would be the extra distance beyond the distance to your station?—We have written the Ministry of Food repeatedly on that point, and they will not allow it.

Mr. Anker Simmons: I know it used to be allowed.

5087. *Mr. Overman*: How many acres of land do you farm?—380.

5088. Are you a tenant farmer?—Yes.

5089. You have told Mr. Anker Simmons that these are estimates; but I take it the yields of four quarters

of wheat and four quarters of oats are taken from actual facts?—Yes, but not absolutely. Of course, we took our own farm into consideration. I had a Committee of three others who helped me to fill in these, and we took what we thought was a fair average for Cleveland. We took our own farms into consideration, the crops we had actually got, and what was a fair average for Cleveland.

5090. What do you grow in barley? You do not mention it?—Personally, I grow very little of barley. Our land is more suitable for wheat and oats.

5091. What is the usual yield of barley in your neighbourhood?—I have never been able to grow more than about four quarters of barley.

5092. That is your outside crop?—Yes.

5093. Yours are all Lady Day tenancies in Yorkshire, are not they?—Not Lady Day; it is May 13th in our district.

5094. Is it your custom in your country always to put farmyard manure on your fallows for wheat?—Yes, I think it is.

5095. A general custom?—Yes.

5096. In reckoning out these costs what did you put your horse labour cost at per day?—I think about 7s. 6d. or 8s.

5097. *Mr. Batchelor*: Will you look at paragraph 8, your cost of production of turnips. You have been asked already on the question of farmyard manure. How is that manure made? Is it from cattle, or how?—It is made principally from cattle and, of course, horses—a few farm horses.

5098. If you did not charge that farmyard manure against the turnips, where could you charge it?—We would charge it to the succeeding crop, I suppose.

5099. It must be charged against crops?—Yes, I take it so.

5100. So you consider that you are quite right in putting it down here to the crop to which it was applied?—Yes. I said in the potato crop that a certain proportion of the manure should go to the succeeding crop, and I think the same with regard to turnips.

5101. What about the spreading of that manure? Is that included in the 10s. per ton, because it does not appear otherwise in the cost of growing turnips? It appears under potatoes as an entry?—In many cases there is not any spreading except the carting to the field. In our district it is thrown on the land from the cart and ploughed in; with potatoes we spread it in the row.

5102. Then coming to potatoes, you have there 20 loads of farmyard manure at 10s. Does that include the carting on to the field?—I think it did, I do not think we charge for carting.

5103. Then when you come to the marketing of your potatoes, what does that term include, "marketing 25s."?—Carting to the station and so forth.

5104. 5s. a ton?—Yes.

5105. Then your deduction there in respect of manure would be something like £4, being £4 0s. 6d., which you mention in the next item of growing wheat after potatoes?—That is so.

5106. Is five tons per acre about your average yield of potatoes?—Yes, I think so.

5107. Even with 20 loads of farmyard manure?—I think it would be too much this time.

5108. I quite admit that, but taking it on the average?—Yes, I think it is an average for Cleveland.

5109. Is this a clerical error? You have here under cost of one acre of oats: rent and rates £1 10s. In all the others it appears as £1 15s. It is the same land, I presume?—We took it on the fallow land that was in the four course system; and on the four course system we reckon all the land at 30s. an acre, and the oats are on the four course system after seeds.

5110. And you also take the wheat after fallow at £1 10s. and the others at £1 15s.?—Yes.

5111. *Mr. Cautley*: Do I understand that these prices were settled by a Committee appointed by the Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture?—It is a Committee appointed to assist me in drawing up these.

5112. They are agreed by all of you?—Yes.

5113. First of all, is the land strong land, do you say?—Yes, mostly in Cleveland.

5114. Do you plough with two horses or three?—Three the first time.

5115. Let us take the cost of the acre of wheat which is of most interest to me. What did your Agricultural Committee charge for ploughing?—You mean with a tractor?

5116. Yes. Take a tractor, if you like, or with horses?—I am sure I cannot say. I did not have any done with that; but it was certainly more than we charged.

5117. Exactly. That is what I want to know. It was a great deal more, was not it?—Yes.

5118. Are not they charging 30s. and 32s. 2d. an acre?—Yes, they would be, quite.

5119. Why do you put it at 25s.?—We think we can do it cheaper than they can.

5120. You have told me three horses. How can you plough an acre of land with three horses for 25s.?—We took the four times ploughing when we charged 25s., and it is only in the case of ploughing for fallow that we use three horses.

5121. We are dealing with fallows now?—We thought, seeing that the other three times we ploughed with two only, it was a fair charge.

5122. You have told me that you estimated a horse alone to cost 8s.?—Yes.

5123. Is that including depreciation of the horse at all? I suggest it does not, even at 8s.?—No.

5124. You have allowed nothing for the depreciation of the horse?—No.

5125. In the 8s., have you allowed for the days a horse has been in the stable or not?—Yes, I have.

5126. I do not quarrel with the 8s. at all, if you added something to it for depreciation of the animal?—Many of us reckon to make a profit on our horses.

5127. On the average?—Yes, I think so.

5128. You are very lucky if you do?—I should be very sorry if I could not, anyhow.

5129. The 25s. is decidedly low, is not it?—I do not think it is too high.

5130. I suggest it should be 30s. at least or higher than that—a great deal higher?—Perhaps 25s. would be quite enough for two. There are three times ploughing there with two horses, and only once with three horses.

5131. I notice again you have only charged two guineas for the whole of the harvest, threshing, marketing and everything. I suggest you cannot do it for anything like that?—Our aim was to get as near the actual cost as possible.

5132. That is what we want to get at?—We did not want to put extravagant charges.

5133. Just to go back for one moment to the ploughing, how much do you plough in a day?—An acre is considered to be a day's work; but I am afraid we do not get it done nowadays.

5134. I suggest with strong land you would not get more than three quarters of an acre done at the outside?—Not in the winter months, no.

5135. Do you suggest this price for getting an acre ploughed to-day?—On the fallow I think we did.

5136. What is a day's work now. What are the hours?—They are supposed to work from a quarter to seven to half-past five in Yorkshire.

5137. How many hours work is it?—54 hours a week. Those are the hours fixed.

5138. What was it before the war?—I think it was practically the same. They are supposed to work three quarters of an hour extra on the five days in order to get their Saturday half day; but I am afraid we do not get it.

5139. The hours are the same, are they?—Yes.

5140. I notice you do not include anything either for interest or for management?—There is nothing put down for that.

5141. What do you estimate is the capital employed in a farm in Cleveland to-day?—I should think almost £20 per acre on a mixed farm.

5142. At 5 per cent. that would be £1 an acre for interest, would not it?—Yes.

5143. You have included nothing for management?—No. In our costs for production, they would not allow us to put anything down for that.

5144. How is a farmer to live if he does not charge for his time?—That is true, I suppose.

5145. We are not dealing with profit but just with his own time?—That is right.

5146. I notice there is nothing either for keeping the ditches or fences in order?—I wanted to make some remarks with regard to that.

5147. What are they?—That it is most difficult to arrive at costs of production. There is all that class of work which it is almost impossible to put to any crop. There is the repairing of roads, and so forth.

5148. Yes, and there is nothing included for that?—Then there is loss in your stock through death and other causes, and there is loss in crops. Sometimes a crop absolutely fails.

5149. We are only dealing with the wheat crop now. Mr. Anker Simmons suggested that as to the cost of the valuation when the incoming tenant takes possession, there is a certain scale adopted by the agreement or the custom of the country as to the valuation of manures, and therefore you apply the same in estimating the value of a crop. It does not apply at all?—I agree; that is my contention.

5150. What we are here to do is to find the actual cost of growing a crop?—Yes.

5151. And in the actual cost of growing a crop, is the actual cost of manure an essential ingredient?—Yes.

5152. Have you and your Committee in the best of your opinion taken the average cost of production of the manure?—Yes.

5153. I suggest to you that 10s. a ton is a low figure; that is, for the manure, the carting and the spreading? Although it is only throwing it out of the cart, it takes time?—Quite so.

5154. I suggest you could not get it done or buy it at that. If you said to anybody: "I will buy 100 tons of manure and you spread it on my field," you could not get it done at 10s. a ton?—Possibly not.

5155. Do not take my word. I am only speaking of the South of England?—It is a thing which is not on the market; you cannot buy it. There is no such thing as buying it.

5156. You could not buy it, so that you can only form an estimate of its value?—Yes.

5157. Can you tell me how much you have allowed for the labour of getting it on to the land and spreading it out of the 10s.?—No, we did not make any calculation. We thought the 10s. a fair price for the manure and the carting.

5158. I agree with what Mr. Anker Simmons said, and I think you would probably agree, that the fair cost of wheat is to take the cost of an acre of fallow and the cost of an acre grown after potatoes or seeds or whatever your root is, and divide by two?—Yes.

5159. I understood that that came to an average of about £15 an acre. That is 75s. a quarter?—Yes; on the fallow it was £15 an acre.

Chairman: I think he took it without the straw. The first was £18, the next is £11 12s., and if you add those two together and divide it is £15.

5160. *Mr. Cautley*: Yes. It comes to £15, and then the farmer would have the straw?—Is that on the two crops?

5161. On the first one and the last one it works out at £15, and then there is the straw to be deducted?—No, the straw was deducted in the first.

5162. Yes; but to get at the average of £15 you must take it at £18 and £11 12s. making practically £30, and then the farmer has the straw?—Yes, that is right.

5163. I have already pointed out in my view that these figures are on the low side and there is nothing allowed either for interest or management or for weeding or road repairing or anything of that sort?—Yes, weeding is charged.

5164. Quite right, but nothing for fencing or ditching?—No, nothing for fencing or ditching.

5165. You told us you thought that a guarantee of 70s. would be effective. In the first place, on your figures, the 70s. would not show any profit?—Yes. I think it would. It would show a slight profit; not a very high one.

5166. Four quarters come to £14? I think on the average deducting the straw, this is costing about £3 per quarter or a little over.

5167. I was putting it to you the straw is about £2 10s. in one case and £3 in the other, against the other expenses and the farmer's profit?—I see.

5168. These things are very difficult to get an absolutely exact figure of. This is what I really want to get at. It is a point of principle. £14 you see would not show a profit. Would you agree with me that the farmer will grow what pays him?—Undoubtedly.

5169. That if the object is to get wheat grown, farmers must see a profit in growing wheat?—That is so.

5170. If the object is to get milk grown on the farm, farmers must see a profit in growing milk?—That is so.

5171. And would you agree that the farmer will cultivate any land if it pays him?—Yes; if he can get the labour, undoubtedly.

5172. Assuming that he can get the labour, the farmer is there to make money; it is his livelihood?—Quite so.

5173. Taking this land that you have given us at what I have put, and the figures are before the Commission, at £15 an acre the average cost, is it the best land in Cleveland or the average land?—The average land.

5174. Is there a large quantity below that average used for growing corn at the present moment?—Yes, there is some. There is some better and some worse. That is the average.

5175. To what extent of district are you speaking for in your chamber?—The whole of Cleveland.

5176. I do not know how big that is?—I cannot tell you the acreage.

5177. Is it the whole of the North Riding?—No.

5178. Only a portion of the North Riding?—Yes. It extends out to about Whitby I think, and from there to Middlesbrough on the coast.

5179. Could you give us any idea how much land would be below this average of £15 cost?—I do not quite follow you.

5180. You see you are telling us what the average cost of growing wheat is. If there is a large amount of land below the average with a great deal of land above the average, how, if the guarantee of 70s. will keep the average land in cultivation, will it keep the bad land in cultivation?—I see your point now. I only suggest that as a minimum.

5181. Of course a guarantee is a minimum, and we are only dealing with a minimum?—I think it would encourage the farmer if the farmer thought he had a guaranteed minimum of 70s., and had the play of the market. He has the hope of getting more. I think it would tend to keep his land under cultivation, provided wages do not go any higher than they are to-day. That is made on the assumption that wages remain the same.

5182. You do not meet the difficulty I have. I quite see the 70s. might be enough for the better land; but my difficulty is on your figures to see how that would keep the worst land in cultivation?—I suggested that as a figure we thought was the one.

5183. You cannot give us any assistance on that point?—No, I think the 70s. is enough.

5184. There is only one other thing I want to ask you a little about. I gather that you are a milk producer?—Yes.

5185. Of course, with milk there is no foreign competition at all, is there?—Very little.

5186. Practically nothing. Therefore if you have the free play of the market, whatever it was, milk would be produced and as much milk as was wanted. Is not that your opinion?—It would in time. I mean there is a great scarcity, and likely to be a very great scarcity this winter in my opinion.

5187. But in view of the great scarcity now, is not it absolutely essential in the public interest that there should be a limitation put on the price?—Perhaps at the present time; but I think it is the very fact of the milk having been controlled in the first that has caused this scarcity.

5188. Milk is absolutely essential?—Yes.

5189. Would not you really agree it is absolutely necessary that there should be a controlled price at the present moment?—Possibly for this winter; but it is

my contention that this continued control is driving people out of the business.

5190. *I* agree. Is not the real fault of the control—we may grumble at the prices, of course—that it is always put on too late—the prices are fixed too late?—Yes, I have already said so.

5191. Is it possible, with prices for the winter only just now fixed—I think last week—to arrange our cows so that there will be either a larger or less supply of milk this winter?—It is not possible.

5192. Have you considered at all whether a guarantee of cheese prices would do anything to stabilise the milk supply?—I have not considered that point. I know very little about cheese making.

5193. Do not they make cheese in Cleveland?—I think there is a little made up in the Dales perhaps.

5194. Did the Dale farmers make butter only and rear calves?—They make a great deal of cheese up there.

5195. If there was a guarantee on cheese in the summer and they were to sell milk in the winter, would not these keep the calves at the same time?—Yes, it certainly would assist.

5196. And would not that benefit the hill farmers a great deal?—I should think so; they would get their calves reared in the summer.

5197. They would get their calves reared and their cheese marketed in the summer, and they could sell milk in the winter?—Yes.

5198. Your Chamber has not considered whether that is possible?—No, that has not been considered.

5199. Has your Chamber considered whether it is at all possible to fix a guarantee for cereals on a sliding scale, as to the cost of wages or the cost of other commodities at all?—That has not been considered.

5200. And you could not give any opinion as to whether such a thing is feasible now?—I have thought of the matter, and I think there should be some relation between them.

5201. Might I suggest you should put that before your Chamber when you go back, and that they should consider it. I have one more point to put to you. It has generally been agreed by witnesses here that a guarantee to be really effective and beneficial to Agriculture, ought to be for a series of years. Do you fall in with that?—Yes, I do. I think for 5 years.

5202. Suppose such a thing were to be done, you will see the Government have no control over other prices. They have no control over the cost of anything that a farmer has to buy, or of labour; so that would not there have to be some provision for alteration or rectification? It would be very difficult to arrive at a fixed price for 7 or 8 years, or even 6 years, with all the other elements in the cost of production varying?—Yes, that is so.

5203. And if some scheme of variation according to the other main elements which constitute the cost of production were adopted, it would be more likely to be a workable plan, would not it?—Yes, I do think so. We have discussed this matter, not at the Chamber but amongst my friends.

5204. But you have no suggestion to make?—No, I have not at the present time.

Chairman: Then you will communicate with us perhaps?

5205. *Mr. Cautley*: If you would bring that suggestion as to whether any plan for a sliding scale could be made and agreed to by practical people, as the Chairman suggests, your Chamber might communicate again with the Secretaries of the Commission?—I shall be very glad to do that.

5206. *Mr. Dallas*: You stated that in order to keep the land in cultivation, you suggested there should be a guarantee of 70s.?—Yes.

5207. Are you aware that large numbers of farmers are not keeping their land in cultivation but letting it go down to grass?—I think to a great extent that has been owing to the shortage of labour.

5208. You think it is due to shortage of labour, and that if they had plenty of labour, they would not do that?—I do not think they would. I mean these shorter hours are having a very great effect. Farmers find they cannot get the work done.

5209. I do not want to confuse the two things: I will deal with that later. But you suggest it is due to the shortage of labour?—Yes.

5210. Would you be surprised if I were to tell you that in many districts where farmers are laying their land down to grass, instead of labour being short it is plentiful and they are dispensing with the labour?—That is not so in our district. You cannot get labour in our district.

5211. Of course we have to deal with the whole country?—Yes, but I can only speak for my own district.

5212. The labour is actually short there?—Yes, undoubtedly.

5213. You would agree that if the farmer is to have guarantees for the produce that he sells, the people who supply him, say, with tractors, harness, feeding stuffs, and artificial manures, should also be subsidised and given a guarantee by the Government?—I think that would be almost impossible.

5214. So that your idea is that the farmer should have a free market for what he buys and a protected market for what he sells?—I only think it is in the interests of the nation that they should be guaranteed the price of wheat.

5215. But do not you think that the man who is producing the feeding stuffs, the artificial manures, and the tractors, would also say that it was in the interests of the nation that he should be protected and guaranteed the prices for what he produces?—The feeding stuffs are not produced in this country, and I think we want to buy as cheaply as we can when we are buying from abroad.

5216. That is my point. You want to buy as cheaply as you can and sell as dearly as you can?—That is our point. I have always tried to do that.

5217. You understand, of course, that the community will suffer for that?—I do not think so at all. I think it is better to have wheat at 70s. a quarter than to have none at all.

5218. You do not anticipate we will have none at all, do you?—I mean a shortage then. I will put it that way.

5219. With reference to your labour you said, in answer to Mr. Cautley, that this estimate of 70s. was made on the basis that wages remained as they are?—Yes.

5220. But in your evidence-in-chief, you stated that it is given with the prevailing and ever-increasing high wages. How do you reconcile those two statements?—I do not quite follow you.

5221. You are making an allowance for an increase even in the present wages?—If the wages went up, I suppose the prices would go up. That was my idea.

5222. No, not in accordance with you evidence-in-chief; that the 70s. is given with an allowance for ever-increasing high wages. You have made allowance for that?—Yes; I took it on the basis of wages at the present time, anyhow.

5223. With reference to your labour, you made a statement in answer to one of the Commissioners, that owing to the Orders of the Wages Board you got them about every three weeks?—No, I do not think I said every three weeks.

5224. I thought you did; but you meant they were always harassing you, anyhow?—Yes, that is so.

5225. Would you be surprised if I told you that only three times in the course of two years have the Wages Board fixed your wages in Yorkshire?—I thought they had been altered more times than that.

5226. Three times only. You were saying that you could not get the men to do the work, and you had to get women?—That is dairying work.

5227. You said because of the half-holiday. I was not quite clear in my mind; but it seemed to me you said that because the men got a half-holiday, you could not get them to work. Is that it?—The point was this. I was speaking of the dairying branch of farming. You have your horse work. They have nothing to do but turn the horses out, say, at Saturday dinner-time, and need not go back till the Monday morning. Our stockman or cowman has to be there the whole of the week-end; and they will not do it. It is not reasonable. I would not do it. I would go and be a horseman.

5228. But if those men are there, they are getting overtime rates?—They do not want it; they are getting plenty without.

5229. I want to touch on that point too. You say they are getting plenty. The minimum rate of wages in Yorkshire is how much?—47s. a week for the horsemen or stockmen.

5230. That is for the customary hours, not 54 hours?—No, it is the customary hours.

5231. With the customary hours he does his customary duties of attending to his horses and stock; so there is no difficulty there?—No, but you cannot get a man for that minimum wage.

5232. Whatever minimum wage you get, includes extra hours for attending to his cattle. The feeding and cleaning are included in his customary hours, and do not count as overtime and are not paid for as overtime?—No; that is not so in the case of the cowman and stockman.

5233. Then where does the difficulty arise?—Because, as I have already said, you have to pay considerably more in the case of the cowman, who is having to work a portion of his Saturday afternoon and a portion of his Sunday. You cannot get him at 47s.

5234. I do not suggest you ought to get him at that?—No, I do not either.

5235. One other question with regard to control. You are very anxious to get rid of control, and I am not quarrelling with that; but is not it the experience of the Ministry of Food that in answer to the demand generally they took off control, and immediately prices went up so high that they had to reimpose control?—To what article are you referring?

5236. There were several articles—butter, margarine, and those things. It is the general effect of the taking off of control. I am not referring to any particular articles. It seems to be your own idea to take off control, because you said in reply to one of the Commissioners that ultimately, not immediately, you thought prices might go down, but they might go up at first?—Yes. I am not in favour of taking off control on everything at the present time. Personally, I do think it should come off milk. I think control has had the effect of causing the reduction in the output of milk.

5237. Would you be surprised if I told you that a very important witness who has been here and given evidence, said that the one thing he thought control should be maintained upon was milk?—He is entitled to his opinion; I still stick to mine. I do not say it from a personal or a farmer's point of view, but I look at it more broadly from the national point of view. I think it is our duty to try and produce all the milk we can in the interests of the nation, and we are trying to do that; and the suggestion I make is with that object.

5238. I may say the witness I have in my mind had the same object in view; but you have evidently a different method of obtaining it?—Yes, quite so.

5239. With reference to women, you stated that women with their present wages preferred to work overtime?—Yes.

5240. Does that mean that their weekly wages are so small that they have to work overtime to make a decent living?—No. At these overtime rates they get extra pay, and I suppose they like to make a little extra.

5241. Are the women built any different from the men; because your contention, and that of other employers, is that the men are making such high wages and getting so well paid that no inducement under Heaven will make them work overtime?—Yes, I do agree with that with regard to the men. I was perhaps speaking of women more personally. The two I have employed do not wish for the Saturday afternoon holiday; they prefer to work at the overtime rates. I told my cowman he was to give them it in rotation, and he said they did not want it.

5242. I submit the only deduction to be drawn from that is that women's wages are not enough, and they have to work overtime in order to get a decent living wage?—They are earning from 15s. to 30s. a week according to the hours that they put in; from that we can only deduct 14s. a week for their board.

5242A. How do you work that out, because I am interested. I mean the minimum rate of wages in Yorkshire is 7d. an hour?—7d. an hour between 7 and 5; and 9d. an hour before 7 and after 5.

5243. How many hours do they work?—They commence at half past 5 in the morning, milking.

5244. And finish when?—I do not wish to say anything against them. They go on till 7 at night. My contention is that they could get done sooner.

5245. *Mr. Duncan*: You state with regard to the de-control of the milk supply that probably the first effect would be an increase in the price and consequently an increased production, which would bring back the price again presumably to about the figure where it is now?—Possibly yes.

5246. In what way would that help the position of the dairy farmer situated as you are in Cleveland at the present time?—I said that I thought it would be a benefit. I do not see any benefit to us, but from a national point of view. I think it would be beneficial to the nation. I think there would be increased supplies.

5247. Where would these supplies be brought from? What class of farmers would go into the milk trade who are not in it now?—There are many cows out of dairy herds that have been sold for beef undoubtedly, as the farmer considered that the price of milk did not pay.

5248. But according to your own statement, the ultimate effect would not be to maintain the dairy herds if the price were not put permanently higher. Would these men simply because of de-control, and with prices returning to the same level, increase their dairy herds or stock producing dairy herds?—They would know where they are. You never know from one month to another now the price you have to expect. That is where the uncertainty in the business is caused.

5249. Then your point is that you would rather trust the market than trust a controlled price?—That is so. I am speaking rather personally that way. I do not say every farmer is of that opinion, but that is my own contention.

5250. But when you come to wheat cultivation, you are not prepared to trust the market?—We are more subject to foreign competition in the grain prices.

5251. And you have not the same faith that you would be able to maintain your prices as you would in the milk trade?—That is so.

5252. But if you have faith that the prices are to be maintained in the milk trade, then that hardly squares with your idea that the price would come back to the present control price which is driving dairy farmers out of the business?—I think it is better from the country's point of view that we should have a good supply of milk. I think milk is still one of the cheapest commodities on the market; and I think it is in the nation's interest that we should have a supply of milk even if it were at a rather increased cost.

5253. So that your reconsidered opinion is that the cost would be increased with de-control?—For a time. It is impossible to say what would be the effect in the future; but I think it would tend to dairy cows being kept rather than being sold out. It is an undoubted fact that there are numbers of herds being disposed of. I know several in my district; I can speak of three that sent 300 gallons a day into Middlesbrough, which have already been disposed of since the war.

5254. Then as to those dairy farmers who have given up milk production, what form of farming have they gone into?—Beef and mutton production.

5255. Am I right in assuming that the estimates you have given here as to the cost of cropping are on mixed farms in Cleveland?—I think so.

5256. With a large proportion of them in milk or meat production?—Yes.

5257. Can you give us any balance sheets for those farms, showing the whole of the farming operations; so that we may tell what the results are over the whole of the operations, and not with regard to any particular crops you have given?—No, I am not in a position to do that.

5258. In estimating the results of farming in your district, would you credit your milk production or your beef production with the farmyard manure at 10s. a ton?—Yes. That 10s. included carting on to the land.

5259. So that in considering these estimates, we are to take into account what the effect of producing these crops is upon the other operations of the farm, and take the farm as a unit?—Yes.

5260. But you are not prepared to give us any estimate as to what the result is, taking all the operations into account, so that we may judge of the whole of the operations?—I think that is quite impossible; so much depends on seasons. If you get a wet winter after the first crop, there is probably very little residue left. If you get a fine season, there is pretty good residue left for the succeeding crops.

5261. Could you give us any estimate then of the whole of the operations, in the same way as you estimate for these particular crops. I mean, including the other operations on the farm so as to eliminate that particular difficulty you have just raised?—Do you mean you wish me to say how much residue is left from one crop to another?

5262. No. What I want to say is this. You give us estimates of producing particular crops on farms. These are simply part of the operations on your farms; and I want to know what the financial result of farming in your district is, including the whole of the operations and not selecting particular crops in this way?—That is a question I can hardly answer, I think.

5263. If I may put it in this way; from your reply to certain Commissioners, particularly to Mr. Cautley, it would appear as if you take these costs as being the very minimum costs, and would be inclined to increase them in some respects. My impression from the statements you give as to the cost of production and the yield you have is, that you must be farming at a loss in Cleveland?—I do not think so. I think that the majority of these crops work out at a profit of something like 30s. per acre.

5264. *Mr. Cautley*: At present controlled prices?—Yes.

5265. *Mr. Duncan*: Is that 30s. per acre to cover the whole of your cost of management, return on capital, and everything?—Yes.

5266. That is the profit the farmers of Cleveland are working at at the present time?—I should not think they would make that this time. I do not think they will make any at all this year.

5267. Then in paragraph 2 of your *précis*, you speak about the shortage of labour. I think I rather gathered from what you said, that the wages being paid in your district are actually above the minimum rates fixed?—Yes.

5268. That would indicate that the shortage of labour is existing in spite of the high wages you are paying?—That is so.

5269. Do you anticipate that the labour supply will increase at the present wages, or that wages will have to go still higher?—I am afraid in our district they drift into the towns and into the mines; that is the difficulty. The mines are all over Cleveland; and they drift into the towns which seem to have great attractions for them, and prefer the towns to the country.

5270. Do you think that the guarantee of 70s. a quarter would enable you to retain the labour?—We have a little more than we had; but I have no very great hopes that there will be a great supply—not in the immediate future. It may have that effect ultimately. Much will depend on the wages they get in the industrial centres.

5271. Then does that mean that the maintenance of cultivation depends much more on your labour supply than on any guaranteed price?—You cannot cultivate without labour, yes.

5272. *Mr. Edwards*: I understood you to say that you are in favour of decontrol of milk?—Yes.

5273. Assuming that the Government should step in and give the farmer a guarantee for his corn, what would you say if the Government should step in and tell the farmer that, in view of the fact that the Government is going to guarantee the price of wheat, he must grow a certain quantity of wheat? That is adopting the same plan, practically, as was done in the war?—You cannot grow wheat unless you get suitable seasons, and unless you have the labour and so forth.

5274. But my point is this. You seem to disfavour the control of the milk trade, and yet you ask for a guaranteed price?—I do not ask for a guaranteed price of milk.

5275. No, but for corn. It would be natural for the nation to ask farmers, in view of the guaranteed price, to put in a certain proportion of wheat or any other corn which is guaranteed. That is my point?—That is a very difficult matter. There are districts which are suitable for wheat growing, and there are other districts which are not at all suitable for wheat growing. We found that out during the war. It is a mistake to allot any portion of any farm to wheat growing, and assume it is suitable or not suitable.

5276. But assuming you have suitable land, would you view with favour Government control, and their saying, "In view of the fact that the Government is going to guarantee you a price, you must cultivate such an area of wheat, or any other crop which is guaranteed"?—We certainly should not like that. We have had too much of that sort of thing during the war. I do not think it is in the interest of the country.

5277. You say that the rent of your land is 30s. to 35s. an acre?—Yes.

5278. Assuming that the Government should adopt your suggestion of a guaranteed price of 70s. a quarter on the wheat, what effect would that have on the rent of the land?—I do not think, under present conditions, it would have any effect at all. I think that is only just a barely paying price.

5279. Would not it have a tendency to steady the rent? In view of the fact that the farmer would know he would have a steady price, would not it naturally follow that the rent would be steadied in the same way?—By "steadied," you do not mean increased, do you?

5280. No, my question is, what effect it would have, if any?—I do not think it would have any real effect. It might steady the value of land a little.

5281. You say in your *précis* that dairy farming is the most arduous of all branches of farming?—That is so, undoubtedly.

5282. And you also said that many farmers are giving up selling milk?—Yes.

5283. You also said that farmers are giving up butter making and going in for milk-selling?—That is because the milk price pays better than the butter price. That is why they are doing that.

5284. Therefore, possibly you produce the same quantity of milk in your district as you did previously?—There is possibly as much going into the towns; but it is going out of the Dales to a great extent. It is instead of their making butter and cheese; and I think that has a very injurious effect on stock rearing, because the calves are not being retained.

5285. I find from your figures that you grow about four quarters of wheat to the acre, and the same amount of oats. You said that your land is suitable for wheat and oats, and yet you have only four quarters of oats?—Yes, after clover.

5286. Do you think that is a satisfactory return in oats?—I cannot say it is perfectly so; but I think it is much above the average this year.

5287. Could you venture an opinion as to the capital of the farms? Have farmers in the past had command of sufficient capital to carry on their farms to the best advantage? Speaking pre-war, I should say possibly there might be some who had not enough capital.

5288. You are aware that areas of land are being sold at the present moment in various parts of the country?—Yes.

5289. What is the case in your district?—A great quantity of land has been sold in our district, too.

5290. Has a proportion of that land been sold to the tenant farmers?—Yes.

5291. In view of the fact that you say some of them were under-capitalised in pre-war times, what effect do you think the fact that they have to find their capital to buy the land and the capital to handle their farms, will have on their farming in the future?—The man who is buying his farm now, is not the man who was short of capital before the war.

5292. What becomes of those who were short of capital?—In many cases they are having to turn out when the farms have been sold over their heads.

5293. Is that the case? That there are farmers in your district whose farms are sold over their heads?—Yes, undoubtedly. There is one on the next farm to myself.

5294. Who failed to purchase his farm?—Yes.

5295. Did he try to do it?—I do not think so.

5296. Was it offered by public auction?—Yes.

5297. In the case of a farmer who does buy his land, has he any claim whatever for compensation under the Agricultural Holdings Act?—I should say he will against his landlord. It is a point I have not considered; but I think he ought to have.

5298. But does he? That is the point. I ask that question because it was asked at the last meeting of this Commission; and the answer given was to the effect that he had. Assuming you buy your own farm now, you have, of course, improved it greatly, no doubt?—I hope so; but it is not for me to say.

5299. But assuming you buy your farm, do you say that you would have a claim against the vendor of the farm for any compensation for the improvement you made?—I suppose it would be according to the conditions of sale, would not it? I mean, if the place was sold and I did not buy it, I should have a claim against the purchaser.

5300. That is the point. Therefore, if you bought your own farm, your claim would be against yourself?—It almost appears so.

5301. *Mr. Green*: Are you in a position to give us a balance sheet of your farm?—No, I am afraid I cannot do that.

5302. Would any of the members of your Committee be in a position to give us a balance sheet of their farms?—I do not think so.

5303. You say that in spite of paying more than the minimum wage, most farmers have been making on an average about 30s. an acre?—I do not say they are now. I said that I did not think farmers would make any profit this year, or very little.

5304. Would you agree that no guarantee was necessary to stimulate farmers to grow wheat on good land?—A farmer is going to grow what suits his land best and what is paying best. At the present time I think barley is the best paying crop.

5305. Do you think we could have any price high enough to stimulate farmers to grow wheat on poor land?—I think so. Poor land is only suitable for wheat growing—either that or grass. If it would not grow wheat, it would not grow anything.

5306. With reference to paragraph 2 of your *précis*, could not the small farmer in England imitate the small farmer in Ireland, and by co-operation take every advantage of up-to-date machinery?—There are not very many really small farmers in our district; and I think most of them have self-binders and so forth, up-to-date machinery.

5307. With regard to the half-holiday, are you aware that one of the Board's investigators reported that the lack of the half-holiday was a hay seed in the shirt of the labourer?—I do not follow that.

5308. I think he was very graphic; but it means the lack of the half holiday is the thing that has made the labourer very discontented in the past?—I do not think so.

5309. With regard to dairying, have not the hours many cowmen have had to work, that is to say, on 365 days a year, made their lives indistinguishable from servitude?—Certainly; as I have already said in my remarks, I think it is one of the most arduous branches of farming, whether it is carried on by the farmer and his family or by hired labour.

5310. Then unless you make the conditions fairly good for the cowmen, you are not likely to get many cowmen? That is so; I quite agree.

5311. Then do not you think the half-holiday and shorter hours will make it easier for farmers to produce milk than it has been in the past?—But who is to do the work when he has his half-holiday? That is the difficulty. We quite approve of his having his half-holiday; but who is to do the work?

5312. That will have to be divided amongst the rest, as you do it now?—That means horses standing in many instances.

5313. With reference to paragraph 5 of your *précis*, is not dairy farming after all the safest and most profitable line of farming, though perhaps the most exacting that the small farmer can undertake?—Of course, it depends now on the prices that are fixed We have had prices fixed which we contend are wholly inadequate to meet the costs of production in one or two cases; for instance, in the month of June this year.

5314. I put it to you, would not the small farmer prefer any day to rent a grass farm and keep a few cows, to occupying a market garden of similar capital value? Are not there less fluctuations in the market price of milk than that of vegetables and fruit?—It may be so. That depends on those who fix the prices of food.

5315. Perhaps it will surprise you to learn that I know of a dairy farmer with 100 acres, who last year confessed he had made £500 profit?—He was possibly doing all the work with his own family, and not paying them the minimum wage.

5316. No, he kept several men. Do you agree with me that in districts where there is a heavy rainfall, dairy farmers would improve their economic condition by farming on a system known as continuous cropping?—What do you mean by continuous cropping? Is that on arable land?

5317. Yes; where the rainfall is high, as in Ireland and on the West Coast of England. I do not know whether your rainfall is about the average?—Yes, it is about the average.

5318. Do not you think they would do better with that system? You see there are fodder crops for the cows?—I know what you mean. That also means a lot more labour, and that is what we are short of.

5319. Yes; but do not you think you would make more profit on the whole on the farm?—But if you cannot get the labour, you cannot get it done.

5320. Why do you object to the milking machine? Have you quite a modern one?—Yes, I think so. I have the "Amo." The reason is this. To begin with, there are cows who do not take to it, and will never give their milk to it, and they very soon go dry. Then again we have had some very small breakages, and there is a difficulty in getting parts. I called on the company this morning, and asked them if they did not keep the parts. I wrote to them for one or two simple things, and it took me six weeks to get them. They said they did not keep them, and had to send to Sweden for them. That is our difficulty. I know our neighbours who had milking machines had the same difficulty, although they were English makes. They cannot get the parts.

5321. Supposing a great many farms are going down to grass, as I believe you said they were, what are the farmers doing with their grass?—They are going in for stock raising.

5322. I do not quite understand your paragraph here on the vexed question of manure. I am sorry to have to stress the point again; but in paragraph 9 you have £12 1s. 6d. as the cost of manure. Do you charge the whole of the cost of that to potatoes?—No; a third is charged to the succeeding crop.

5323. Under the cost of one acre of potatoes, the cost of the farmyard manure at 10s. is £10, and superphosphates and sowing £1 3s. 6d., and sulphate 18s., making £12 1s. 6d. Then I see you add on a third to the succeeding crop of wheat, £4. That altogether makes £16 for the two crops, although after all you have only expended £12. Is that not so?—No, I deducted the £4 for the potatoes.

5324. Yes; but you have made a total charge of £16 on the two crops, whereas the total expenditure on manures is only £12?—I have not. £12 was manure applied to the potato crop. I only charged £8 to the potatoes and £4 to the succeeding crop.

5325. I thought you had charged £12 to the potatoes?—No.

5326. But you have added up those items to £40 4s. 3d.?—Yes; but I put a note at the bottom that a third of the manure was to go to the succeeding crop.

5327. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: I understand that you are a farmer yourself?—That is so.

5328. I think you cultivate 380 acres?—Yes.

5329. I want to get on the records with regard to accounts. You have kept accounts of the results on your own farm from time to time, have you not?—I make a valuation every year, but I am afraid that during these war years I have not had time to keep such accurate accounts as would satisfy an accountant.

5330. One would suppose that a person who was capable of making all these various calculations would be just the very man to keep accounts?—I do keep accounts.

5331. Can you say generally what has been the result of your farming, from those accounts, for the last three years?—I cannot give you the actual figures of the result of my farming, but out of the last three years the last year was certainly not so successful as the two previous ones.

5332. Can you tell us on the average during the last three years what profit you made?—I do not think I could off-hand.

5333. You have got the material, surely?—No, I have not got that.

5334. Would you be prepared to produce to the Chairman such accounts as you have?—I am afraid I have no accounts with me with regard to my own particular farm.

5335. Could you get them?—Before I came I asked if I should be required to produce any balance sheet, and I was told no.

5336. It would be of great value to the Commission to get the results of an expert farmer. Can you produce them to us, and if you can, will you?—I do not think I can do that.

5337. Is it that you cannot or that you will not?—I cannot; I have not got correct balance sheets.

5338. You have not got the material?—No.

5339. You speak of a 70s. guarantee. I suppose you are aware that several other experts who have given evidence before us have recommended a guarantee of 60s.?—No, I was not aware of that.

5340. In your idea 60s. would be too little?—Yes.

5341. Have you made any estimate of what such a guarantee would cost the State for the year 1920?—No. I have not done that—so much would depend upon foreign imports and so on.

5342. You look upon it by way of an insurance, do you not?—Yes, that is so.

5343. That is to say, the farmer would be insured up to four quarters of wheat an acre at 70s. a quarter?—Yes. Of course, the four quarters is problematical; he might get it, or he might not get it.

5344. I think the Corn Production Act says "four times," which means four times for each acre?—Yes.

5345. That means four quarters?—Yes.

5346. Have you ever considered, or have your constituents considered, whether the farmers ought not to pay a premium for this insurance?—I do not think that has been considered.

5347. Supposing it were put to them, "We will give you a guarantee of 70s., but on every quarter that you sell at a price beyond 70s. you shall pay a premium of insurance of 1s. a quarter or 2s. a quarter to the Crown." Does that idea shock you rather?—A little bit, I think.

5348. Everybody pays a premium for insurance? I think it is in the interests of the nation.

5349. We have heard the phrase very often—"in the interests of the nation"—but we do not know what it means. I put it to you that if farmers get an insurance they ought to pay a premium for it the same as anybody else has to do.

Chairman: This witness is representing the Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture, and he says that the Chamber has not considered the point of insurance.

5350. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: I want to ask him what he thinks about it himself?—I do not think very much of that.

5351. I do not suppose you would. Do you think it would be fair?—I do not—I am not prepared to answer that question; I have not thought it out.

5352. Have you made any estimate or calculation of what would be the price of wheat or the world's production for the next eighteen months or two years?—No. I have not—the world's production?

5253. Yes?—Certainly not.

5354. We have had it in evidence here that the last two American crops have been excellent?—Yes.

5355. Notwithstanding that the price of wheat has kept up above the minimum?—Yes.

5356. What is it to-day?—I think it is 76s. 6d. to the farmer.

5357. What is barley to-day?—I am not sure.

5358. Will you be surprised to hear that they are asking 100s. for it?—That may be possible; I have heard that it is making a good price.

5359. If the crops in America fail the result will be that the price here will rise?—My point rather in asking for this guarantee for wheat is that the farmer will grow barley if it pays him better; and if it is in the interests of the nation, if the nation wants us to grow wheat, I think they should give some guaranteed price.

5360. That is a political question which we need not go into. You spoke about a 30s. per acre profit, did you not?—Yes.

5361. Would I be right in saying that in addition to that 30s. the farmer has free quarters—a free house. That is included in the rent?—Yes.

5362. He gets his food for very little?—No, he does not.

5363. Most of his food. He gets milk and eggs and butter, and so on?—That would be charged to his household expenses and credited to his farm.

5364. Have you charged it here?—I have not given any estimate of the household expenses.

5365. As a matter of fact that would account for a considerable amount, would it not?—Yes, but the farmer would have to live on the profit; we have not put down anything for household expenses.

5366. In addition to the 30s. an acre, be it right or wrong, he has free quarters which is charged in the rent of the farm?—Yes, a free house.

5367. And I think you must admit a considerable portion of his produce he gets, if not free, at cost price, at any rate?—Yes.

5368. I suggest you should put it to your constituents to consider this question of a premium on all guaranteed produce sold at a price over the minimum.

Chairman: I have no doubt he will report what you have asked him.

5369. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: I think I heard you say you thought it better to grow wheat at 70s. than have a shortage of wheat?—Yes.

5370. You think by offering a guarantee of 70s. you can insure the country against having a shortage?—That will depend to a very large extent on the price of cereals. If barley, as you say, is making 100s. a quarter and is likely to make it, I do not think a farmer is very likely to grow wheat on land that will grow barley.

5371. So that the 70s. would not have very much effect?—I think not if barley was making a very large price.

5372. You spoke of it being in the national interest. What national interest had you in your mind?—To ensure the growing of grain. We know the position in which we were in in this country during the war owing to the shortage of cereals.

5373. That is what you had in mind—only to prevent shortage?—Yes.

5374. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: You told us that there was a great shortage of labour in your district?—That is so.

5375. Have you any complaint to make against the efficiency of the labour you have?—No. I do not wish to make any complaint against the labour.

5376. Do you find the men as efficient as they were, say, in 1913?—I think, particularly with the younger generation, these shorter hours have a tendency to make them wish to be off at nights, and so forth.

5377. That is what I wanted to get at, the younger generation seem to be at fault in one or two cases?—Yes.

5378. Have you any suggestions to make as to how to attract these men more to their work?—No, I am afraid I have not.

5379. What would you say if they were better educated?—I do not think that would attract them more to farm life. Perhaps if they were given an education in the schools to interest them more in rural life that might be an inducement.

5380. You know that it is proposed to give these boys an additional education until they are 16 years of age?—Yes, that is so.

5381. Will that tend to increase or decrease the supply of agricultural labour?—It will decrease it, I should think.

5382. They will be taken away from the farms more than ever in your opinion?—Yes.

5383. Will they find some other occupation if they have more education?—I should think they will find something else. I think the best education a boy can have when he is 14 years of age is on a farm learning to drive a horse and milk a cow, and so forth, that is if he is intended to be a farm labourer.

5384. So that it is not advisable to give him too much education?—I do not think so beyond a certain point.

5385. I think you told us it would be well if control were removed in connection with milk, and so on?—Yes.

5386. Would that increase the supply of butter and cheese, do you think?

The Chairman: That question has been asked already.

5387. *Mr Prosser Jones*: The minimum wage fixed by the Government has been considerably exceeded in your district, has it not?—Yes.

5388. How do you account for that—has that been owing to the shortage of labour?—Yes.

5389. Is the rate of wages likely to increase with a further shortage?—Yes, if the shortage continues I should say so.

5390. Does it not mean that if you are unable to get sufficient labour to cultivate your land you have got more land than you can cultivate?—Undoubtedly it does mean that.

5391. I suppose you are aware that we have in the country about half a million of men who are unemployed at the present moment?—That is so.

5392. Some of them possibly unemployable?—Yes.

5393. Would it not be well if some of these men were put on the land that the farmers cannot manage to find labour for?—Do you mean to come and work for the farmer?

5394. No, to work the land on their own account?—I should think they ought to learn to do the work first. You cannot put anybody on to the land to run a farm.

5395. I am referring particularly to discharged soldiers who were formerly working on the land. Would they not be the most likely people to take up small holdings?—I should say they would certainly be the most likely.

5396. How is it that the home farmer is so very much afraid of foreign competition? The foreigner has quite a long distance to send his commodities to this country. How is it that the foreign farmer can compete with him, and compete successfully with him?—I think, in many cases, they have virgin soil, not worn out land the same as we have, and possibly cheaper labour. I do not know what the freights are nowadays, but I know it was said at one time that corn could be brought from the Argentine cheaper to this country than perhaps it could be sent from Yorkshire here by rail.

5397. Wages in America are considerably above what they are in England, yet we find that the American farmer competes with the English farmer, and competes with him successfully?—Yes. Do you know what system they have there? I suppose he has his land for nothing in many cases, has he not?

5398. *Mr. Langford*: In your *précis* of evidence, I think you imply that unless a guarantee is given on corn the land will revert to grass?—Yes, certain land.

5399. I take it, and I hope you will agree, that the object of giving a guarantee is to prevent land reverting to grass—in other words, to keep a large proportion of the land under the plough?—Yes.

5400. In the interests of the nation?—Yes.

5401. It was the serious shortage of food in consequence of the war that caused the ploughing programme to be inaugurated, was it not?—Yes.

5402. If we have a considerable conflict again, unless land is kept under the plough we may once more be in a similar position?—That is so.

5403. I think you said that, as a farmer, you were not asking for a guarantee; that you wished to be left alone?—With regard to milk.

5404. With regard to other matters, too?—Not with regard to grain.

5405. Have you lost faith in pasture farming?—No, not in pasture farming, certainly not.

5406. Unless a guarantee is given the farmer will pursue his own methods of farming and follow those that are most profitable to him?—That is so.

5407. Which may be grass?—Yes, that is my point.

5408. I think one of the Commissioners put this question to you: You want the guarantee on the things you sell, and you want to buy in a free market?—Yes, I think that question was put to me.

5409. You cannot buy your labour in a free market?—No, we cannot.

5410. There is a minimum wage fixed by law?—That is so.

5411. Therefore labour is not free?—No.

5412. You are not able to purchase your labour in a free market?—No.

5413. Labour is one of the largest items that enter into the cost of production?—That is so.

5414. I am not for a moment against a minimum wage; I think it is quite right?—So do I.

5415. At the same time, it is not quite just to say that everything you buy is in an open and free market?—Undoubtedly not.

5416. Have rents been raised at all in your district?—Not at all as far as I am aware. I do know of one case.

5417. Has much of the land been sold?

The Chairman: That question has been asked.

5418. *Mr. Langford*: Are the farmers suffering much from insecurity of tenure in your district?—Yes, there is a great amount of feeling in regard to insecurity of tenure by estates being sold. I contend that under the Agricultural Holdings Act a farmer does not get the compensation to which he is entitled if he is disturbed; he does not get the full benefit of his improvements.

5419. If there is a fear that their farms are going to be put up to auction over the farmers' heads that does not conduce to good farming, does it?—That is so.

5420. I am afraid I must not ask you any questions about milk, but I would like to.

The Chairman: Why not, unless they have been asked already?

5421. *Mr. Langford*: You told the Commission you would like milk to be de-controlled?—Yes.

5422. Is it seriously your impression that if milk was de-controlled now, the prices would be lower?—No, I think for a time the price would go up.

5423. Are the farmers satisfied with the prices they have been obtaining for milk during the last two or three months?—Undoubtedly not. The point is that it is almost impossible to fix a price that is suitable for all districts. I mean there are districts like the West Riding of Yorkshire where the Travelling Commission, of which you were a member, decided that they should have an extra price. The difficulty is in drawing the line.

5424. Turning to your cost of production of roots, you said that a normal crop in your district was from 10 to 15 tons per acre?—Yes.

5425. You also said that for this year the crop would not be more than 5 tons per acre on the average?—Quite possibly.

5426. After deducting, as you propose to do, one-third of the manure used in a root crop, the cost of production I work out, assuming a normal crop and

under the present cost of production, would be 34s. 6d. a ton?—I have not worked it out, but it will be considerably more this year.

5427. If you get half a normal crop this year—that is 6¼ tons—the price will be double, and it will cost therefore 69s. a ton to produce?—Yes.

5428. Roots enter very largely into the cost of the production of milk?—That is so.

5429. Assuming hay is a free market this winter and roots cost this to produce it is obvious the cost of production of milk will be very heavy this winter?—Yes, this winter.

5430. You are a milk producer?—Yes.

5431. You do not anticipate much profit this winter?—It depends upon the price you fix; I think it will be very difficult to produce.

5432. *Mr. Lennard*: I understand that your tables in your evidence-in-chief are estimates for the present year?—Yes, to a great extent.

5433. I notice in Tables 5 and 10 you only allow 50s. a ton for wheat straw?—Yes.

5434. That is very low, is it not?—I think the selling price fixed is £3 per ton, is it not? Last year's straw was anyhow.

5435. I think it is more like £4 a ton?—Not wheat straw; it was £3 last year, and we took off 10s. for the manurial value; we took it at consuming value.

5436. I know we had to pay £4 a ton for some wheat straw for thatching?—That is a particular job. I know I sold a good deal of wheat straw last year to the Government.

5437. I am speaking of this year?—I do not know that it is likely to sell at much more.

5438. It is being contracted for at £4 a ton.—Possibly there is some cartage on it.

5439. If it is priced at £4 a ton that will bring down your cost of production of wheat after fallow and after potatoes in proportion?—Yes, but I contend that £4 is too much; as a price we cannot get £4 for it.

5440. I think you said in answer to Mr. Rea that you considered that one-third of the cost of farmyard manure put on your wheat field after fallow should be charged to the succeeding crop?—Yes.

5441. That would mean a deduction of about 33s., would it not?—Possibly, I have not worked out those figures.

5442. This deduction for farmyard manure charged to the succeeding crops would reduce the cost of cultivating an acre from £15 0s. 6d. to £13 7s. 6d. in Table 5?—Yes.

5443. And it would bring down the cost per quarter to £3 6s. 10½d.?—Yes.

5444. If you also make the correction which I have suggested for straw that would bring down the cost of a quarter of wheat after fallow to £2 17s. 6d., valuing the straw at £4 a ton, would it not?—Yes, but, as I say, it is not worth £4; we cannot get £4 for it, and, in fact, we are unable to get rid of what we sold at £3.

5445. Is that because of market conditions in your district or because the straw is of an inferior quality?—No, the straw is of good quality, and we still have it standing. It was sold to the Government a year ago nearly. Much of the straw sold last year to the Government is still standing.

5446. Do you think you will have much difficulty in selling straw this year?—One does not know.

5447. We have heard that it is likely to be scarce?—Yes, I think it will be scarce.

5448. I think you said that wages in your district are higher than the legal minimum wage?—Yes.

5449. That means, does it not, that your labour costs are higher than they are in districts where the actual rate of wages is not higher than the minimum wage?—That is so.

5450. So far as labour costs enter into your evidence they could not be applied without deductions to those other districts?—I should think there are not many districts where they can get the labour at minimum rates. In nearly every case the farm labourer appears to get his house, milk and potatoes free.

5451. How much higher than the minimum rate are the wages in your district?—I am giving a cowman, for instance, 52s. a week with house and perquisites.

5452. What is the minimum wage?—47s., but there is the house and his milk and potatoes above the 52s., so that it is really equal to 60s. a week, whereas the minimum wage is 47s.

5453. Surely as the minimum wage is lower than the rate you are paying, which is the market rate, it practically means that you are buying labour in a free market, does it not?—We can give more, but we cannot get it for less; that is what it amounts to.

5454. If the rate was removed you would not be able to get them for less?—No, I do not think we should—not in our district.

5455. Did I understand you to say in answer to Mr. Rea that a guarantee of 70s. a quarter for wheat would leave the farmer a profit?—Yes, I think it would leave him a profit at the present time.

5456. A guarantee of that figure would then be more than a mere insurance against risk?—Yes, slightly.

5457. Supposing the alternative were put to you in the interests of cereal production whether you would rather have a guarantee of 60s. a quarter for four years or no guarantee at all, what would be your opinion?—In any case if it were a minimum guarantee you could not take any harm with it.

5458. You think it would be an advantage from the national point of view?—Yes, but I do not think it would encourage the production. I think that the 70s. figure would be more likely to encourage people to sow wheat.

5459. It would encourage more production than the 60s.?—Yes.

Mr. Nicholls: I should like to ask you whether you do really think it is a good national business to give a guarantee of 70s. a quarter for wheat to keep really poor land under cereals?—There may be certain classes of land that are not worth cultivating at any price—I mean land which would pay better under grass.

5460. Have you got in your mind that the Government ought to pay on acreage and not on quarterage?—No, I think it would be better on quarterage; it would encourage a man to produce all the quarters he could. I think the acreage principle is wrong because a man who is drawing a low crop—two quarters an acre—would get as much as the man who grows four quarters or six quarters.

5461. Does he not know that there is a large part of the land which is really hopeless for wheat growing, and that he could never hope to get more than two quarters from his land, try as he would?—There are districts where I have no doubt that is the case.

5462. That really would not induce a farmer to go in for growing wheat except on really good wheat-growing land?—My opinion is that where you grow only two quarters to the acre the land is not worth cultivating.

5463. It seems to be in the mind of everybody who wants a guarantee that we ought really to give it to induce people to grow wheat on land that cannot really produce four quarters to the acre, and I wanted to know what you thought about it. It seems to me absurd really to guarantee 70s. on four qrs. of wheat on land which nobody thinks will grow more than two quarters?—I do not think personally such land as that is worth bothering with. Land that will only grow two quarters an acre ought, in my opinion, to be put down to grass.

5464. Did I understand you to say, in answer to Mr. Edwards, that you do not feel that if the Government or the nation did give a guarantee in respect of wheat growing, the farmers themselves would not be prepared to give the nation a guarantee that they would produce a certain acreage of wheat?—I think that is rather problematical.

5465. It may seem unreasonable to some people, but it does strike me that if somebody were to come along and ask me to give him a guarantee of so much per quarter for his wheat or for any article he produced, if I were to give him a guarantee I should have a right to say to him, "Now may I rely upon you producing this article up to a certain quantity or a certain acreage"?—Yes.

5466. What do the farmers really think about that? They must have got in their minds when they held their meetings, must they not, that if the nation is going to give a guarantee on the one side the farmers

must also give a guarantee on the other side not only to my mind with regard to acreage but also with regard to wages. It does not seem to be unreasonable to say to a farmer: "If I give you the guarantee that you are asking for, of so much on your wheat, you should produce the acreage I want, and you should also show me that you have spent so much in wages on that acreage." How does that strike you?—I think it would depend to a great extent upon what price other cereals were making. A farmer is going to grow what pays him best even if he has the guarantee. If we get the guarantee of 70s. a quarter for wheat we should still not get the acreage if barley is making anything like 90s. or 100s.; they will hold it back for barley.

5467. Then the assumption is that if the guarantee is given we shall not get the guarantee of the wheat?—Not unless it is sufficiently high.

5468. I think I am right in suggesting that you believe, with the exception of milk, in all agricultural commodities being guaranteed. I think that is the suggestion in your *precis*?—Yes.

5469. Do you not think that if farmers, instead of going in for wheat or cereal growing, were to turn, as you suggest, to producing beef, and they were all putting beef on the market, there would soon be a glut of it?—Yes.

5470. In that event, is there not a chance that these farmers would then come along and say, "We want a guarantee on beef, or else we shall turn round to cereal growing instead of beef producing"?—What I said was that they would produce beef in preference to milk.

5471. Under present conditions?—Yes.

5471A. *Mr. Parker*: You represent the Cleveland Chamber of Agriculture?—Yes.

5472. Has the land in Cleveland district become foul during the war through want of labour and manure?—Yes, there is no doubt that a lot of it has.

5473. Do you anticipate a yield of four quarters an acre before the land is brought back to its pre-war fertility?—No, I think that at the present time that is above the average of this harvest. I do not think it will yield four quarters to the acre this harvest.

5474. Until the land is perfectly clean and brought back to its previous state of fertility, you do not think that four quarters an acre will be the yield?—No, I do not.

5475. I think you said to one member of the Commission that you allowed nothing in your schedule of the cost of production for interest on the farmer's capital?—No.

5476. Would you mind telling me what amount of capital per acre is employed in your district generally?

Chairman: He has answered that—£20 an acre.

5477. *Mr. Smith*: £20 an acre would be more capital than was necessary in pre-war times, would it not?—Undoubtedly.

5478. What proportion would it be—double?—Yes, I should think it is about double.

5479. Do you think the farmers to-day are handicapped by the absence of capital?—I should not think so.

5480. You think that they have got enough capital for their farms?—I should say so, on the whole.

5481. Do we understand that your farm is 380 acres?—Yes.

5482. How long have you had the farm?—Twelve years.

5483. I think you stated that the farmer will want some guarantee in regard to the future in order to give him confidence?—That is so.

5484. You also stated that the farmers had been buying their own farms?—Yes, some of them.

5485. At fairly good prices, I think?—Yes.

5486. Do you not think that the two positions are somewhat contradictory—that the farmer by purchasing his farm is showing a confidence in the future which does not suggest the necessity of a guarantee?—Yes, perhaps that is so to a certain extent. I do not know whether it is justified or not. I think that many of them who have purchased their farms may find themselves in a worse position than they were as tenants.

5487. Still we must give these people credit for knowing their own business?—You asked my opinion, and that is my opinion.

5488. Farmers are practical men, are they not?—I should hope so.

5489. Most of them of lifelong experience?—Yes.

5490. And therefore capable of judging how far they are justified in purchasing their own farms. Does not that suggest a great confidence in the future on their part?—One strong point is that they naturally do not like being turned out of their holdings. Many of them are worse off I know than they were as tenant farmers. They have purchased their farms, and possibly borrowed a proportion of their capital, and they are actually having to pay as much in the shape of interest as they had to pay in rent previously.

5491. Do you state that they have borrowed capital to purchase their farms?—In many cases no doubt.

5492. Does not that show greater confidence still than if they had purchased them with their own money?—I suppose in many cases they would be actually paying more rent now than they were before.

5493. A man working on borrowed capital is working in a worse position than the man who is working on his own capital?—I mean those who had borrowed a proportion of the purchase money, I do not say all of it; I do not think they would be so foolish as to borrow the whole of it.

5494. In the case of men who have bought their farms with their own money that would suggest that the industry had been prosperous up to this time, would it not?—Yes, you would naturally conclude so. With regard to this question of security of tenure, if a man has his own farm he knows that he can do as he likes with it, whereas as a tenant he never knows when he is going to be turned out or whether he is going to get the benefit of his own improvements. As an owner he knows he will get the benefit of his improvements. I would buy my own farm or any other farm to-day even if I could only get 4 per cent. interest on my money just to get the security of my tenure and the value of my improvements.

5495. May I take it you are in favour of security of tenure for the farmer?—Yes, certainly.

5496. And that that would result in better farming?—I think so, undoubtedly.

5497. Would you agree that the profits of the agricultural industry in the last four years have been high?—They have been higher than usual, I am quite prepared to admit that, but as compared with other businesses not so high. We have made hundreds where other people have probably made thousands.

5498. You are thinking of shipping now, are you not?—Yes.

5499. Do you suggest that these figures you have submitted to us are actual costs—or are they estimates? They are estimates.

5500. Therefore, it does not follow that they are exact?—No, they might vary a trifle, but they are an honest attempt to arrive at the truth.

5501. Do you not think if the public are to be asked to give a guarantee so far as prices are concerned which might increase the cost of food that they will want some definite information as to the condition of the industry before they can sanction a proposal of that description?—The present guarantee would not increase the cost of food.

5502. It would as compared to pre-war times—it would be a new departure in our national life, would it not?—Yes.

5503. Do you not agree that the only real test as to the actual cost is the annual profit and loss balance sheet of a farm?—I admit that is the only real test because it is most difficult to arrive at the actual cost even with the best of accounts of any particular crop. I mean it is most difficult to arrive at the profit on a crop of wheat or a crop of potatoes, because you have so many broken days of work from which there is no return, and you have also hedging and ditching and road-making, and so forth, to take into consideration, so that the real test is the balance sheet of the whole.

5504. Assuming all these costs have to be added to the figures you have quoted here it would show the position to be even more difficult than these figures suggest?—That is so.

5505. These figures hardly suggest that the industry is a profitable undertaking, do they?—Yes, I think 30s. an acre is a fair profit.

5506. You consider that a fair profit?—I think so.

5507. Do you not think farmers must have been making considerably more than that if they have been able to increase their capital to the extent that they now have doubled the amount per acre that they did when they started?—They have only the same amount of stock, the difference is that it is worth double. I, for instance, have no more stock on my farm than I had in pre-war times but it is probably worth double now.

5508. You have your weekly outgoings which must require a certain amount of capital to enable you to meet them, and therefore in that respect your capital would have to be increased, would it not? If your wages bill is double each week it means that you have to pay out double and therefore your floating capital will have to be doubled?—I hope we do not pay wages out of capital. We pay them out of the return we get from our produce—our milk and so forth.

5509. You must capitalise your farm to start with?—Yes.

5510. Your stock is more or less fixed, but there is the floating capital which is necessary, and I suggest to you that farmers have done so well during the last few years that they have been able to double their capital, and in many cases to buy their farms at a very high price. That is evidence, is it not, that they must have made more than the nominal amount which you suggest here and which would be reduced if the cost of hedging and ditching and road-making and all the other costs are added to it?—The hedging and ditching are not very serious items.

5511. Still they all count up?—Yes.

5512. Do you not think it is possible for your Association to help us in respect to supplying us with some balance sheets as to actual figures and costs, and so on, so that we can get both sides?—I can ask them, if you like.

5513. I would like to suggest to you that the absence of any real information will make it difficult for the nation to be persuaded of the necessity of giving guarantees?—Yes.

5514. Do you know of any difficulty that is special to the industry which might be worthy of consideration—from the point of view of organisation or administration apart from the question of prices?—I think the question of security of tenure is one of the chief difficulties. I think that the farmer ought to have greater security of tenure than he has at present, because as things are I do not consider that he gets the full benefit of what he has put into the land when he leaves his farm. I know an old valuer who once said that a man can go on to a farm and farm it well for three years and can get as much compensation when he leaves as a man who has farmed his farm well for 30 years. That must be wrong. If a farmer has improved the letting value of his farm by 10s. an acre, as many farmers have done, surely he is entitled to compensation for that, whereas he gets turned out for some reason or another, and the only compensation he gets is the manurial value for the previous three years.

5515. Have you considered that the lack of transport has a bearing upon it?—Yes, I think that much ought to be done in that respect, collecting and delivering milk, and so forth.

5516. If a better system of transport evolved out of this new legislation as to ways and communications that would be helpful to the industry?—Undoubtedly.

5517. Have you any idea as to what proportion of farmers suggested Schedule D for the purpose of Income Tax as against Schedule B?—I do not know of any cases in our district. The question of Income Tax is one thing I would like to say a few words upon. I know it will be suggested that the farmer has the same opportunity as other business people of presenting their accounts, but many farmers have neither the time nor the ability to keep accounts which would satisfy a Surveyor of Income Tax, and I think to be assessed at the present time at double our rent for Income Tax is very unfair.

5518. You think that double the rent is not a fair basis?—I do.

5519. Will it surprise you to know that farmers have stated that rather than have to pay on their profits they would sooner continue that method?—There may be some who think so, but I am certain that is not the general opinion in our district.

5520. Would it be true to say that there is about 1 per cent. of farmers paying on profits and that the others are paying on double the rent?—It may be so, but it is because of the very fact that they have not got books to present.

5521. You would not suggest if those happen to be the proportions that that is the proportion of farmers who fail to keep books or accounts?—I do not know. There are very few farmers that I know who keep books that would satisfy a Surveyor of Income Tax.

5522. In regard to wages, your industry is rather restricted by the minimum wage that has been fixed?—No, we do not object so much to the wage as to the hours. I wish that to be clearly understood.

5523. You are not really seriously disturbed by the minimum wage, are you, because you are paying above it?—No, we do not object to the minimum wage.

5524. *Mr. Walker*: In reply to a previous question you stated that you were paying your men of special classes 52s. a week with house and perquisites?—Yes.

5525. Would you state what those perquisites are?—Free house, a pint of milk a day, with potatoes, what they may require.

5526. Nothing else?—No; I believe in some cases they get coals.

5527. They do not pay 3s. a week for their rent?—No.

5528. So that the 52s. is a cash wage?—Yes.

5529. They draw that every week?—Yes—that is in the case of the cowman; he is the highest paid man.

5530. What do you pay your labourers?—I have a horseman at 42s., with free house and milk and potatoes, the same as the cowman, but he is not a very first-rate man.

5531. You have not thought it right to apply for a permit if he is not a first-rate man?—He cannot stack and thatch, and that sort of thing, but he is quite capable of doing a day's work.

5532. Anyhow, the 52s. is a cash wage?—That is so.

5533. You admit that these figures here are estimates?—Yes.

5534. Do you not think, in regard to the 70s. guarantee which you mention in paragraph 1, that the first essential is to know the normal cost of production?—I do not think that we are quite living in normal times yet.

5535. Take the average cost of production?—That is what we have attempted to arrive at.

5536. That is how you reach your 70s.?—Yes, if our average cost of production did not come to so much as 70s. we are still asking for that just to leave us a small profit.

5537. Which varies, of course, on the estimates you submit?—That is so.

5538. In paragraph 2 you refer to the farmers suffering from a shortage of labour, and that they cannot get the best out of their land, the larger farmer being in a better position than the smaller one, because he can take advantage of up-to-date machinery?—Yes.

5539. Have you thought of any method by which the small man might be helped whereby he can get the use of up-to-date machinery?—Small fields are not suitable for tractors and that kind of machinery.

5540. I am not dealing so much with small fields as I am with small farmers?—Small farmers, as a rule, have small fields.

5541. You have thought of nothing whereby he can be assisted on co-operative lines, say?—It is possible that something might be done on those lines, but, as I think I said some time ago, the average of 80 farms which I surveyed was about 150 acres. I think that man is quite capable of getting all the implements for carrying on his holding.

5542. Yes, but you state here that the larger farmer is in a better position than the small one, as he can take advantage of up-to-date machinery?—That is so.

5543. The men you have been referring to up to now have been able to get on quite all right?—There are a few small holdings that have been created in our district, and I think those men are at a great disadvantage.

5544. Do you not think there is some value in the suggestion with regard to co-operation?—Undoubtedly.

5545. With regard to this labour question, would you be surprised to know that there are some experienced men in the industry who are out of employment at this very moment in certain districts?—I can only say if they will come up to Cleveland they will soon find employment if they want it.

5546. *Sir William Ashley*: Will you kindly tell us a little bit about the industrial situation? I suppose Middlesbrough has a great power of attraction upon the labour in your district?—That is so, and other industrial centres also. There are mines all round Cleveland, as you know.

5547. Yes, quite so. I suppose your labourers usually live in villages?—No, mostly on the farms.

5548. What is there in the way of recreation for an adult agricultural labourer in your district?—I do not think there is very much; they do get a little cricket perhaps on a Saturday afternoon, but that is about the extent of it.

5549. What are the prospects of a hard-working and able labourer? Can he look forward to becoming a bailiff?—I certainly do think so, and many have done so.

5550. In your neighbourhood?—Yes, and particularly the young men who are getting these high wages and who are boarding in. They have every opportunity of saving a great deal of money and might very soon become small holders.

5551. There are small holdings for them to obtain in your neighbourhood?—Yes—I do not mean that they are vacant to-day, but there are many farm labourers who have risen and got on to small holdings and eventually on to farms.

5552. You have been examined a good deal with regard to the confidence which a farmer may be supposed to feel. I suppose you wish us to understand that, although farmers are confident in regard to the prospects of agriculture generally, they are not confident in regard to the prospects of wheat growing?—No, I do not think they are over-confident. We never know what is going to be dumped into this country from abroad, and unless we have a guarantee the price might drop very low.

5553. *Chairman*: We are very much obliged to you, Mr. Buckle, for the evidence you have given us?—If you will allow me, I should like to say there is a very strong feeling in our district that this Daylight Saving Bill is detrimental to the interests not only of farmers, but of the farm labourers. In hay time, and harvest particularly, with the dews in the mornings, now that the hours are fixed we are losing that hour altogether. I also think it is detrimental to the health of the rising generation—the children. They do not get to bed until it is dark—half past ten or eleven. Young boys particularly who have to be at work next morning on the farm do not get to bed until 11 o'clock at night, and they are expected to be at their place next morning at half past five. When they come to their work they are tired out, and I think the Daylight Saving Bill is a great disadvantage in the case of the agricultural industry.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Mr. R. C. BOURNE, called and examined.

5554. *Chairman*: You have put in a statement of the evidence you propose to give to the Commission?—Yes.

5555. May we take it as read?—Certainly.

(*Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.*)

5556. (1) I regret that I cannot give accurate evidence as to pre-war costs, as I was not keeping the farm accounts at that period and the accounts were not analysed at this period. Fourteen horses were kept, and 11 men were employed. Hours worked, 63 per week and wages approximately 18s.

5557. (2) A tractor was purchased in 1917 and two teams were sold, thus reducing the horses to eight. Hours the same, and wages raised to 25s.

5558. (3) In 1918 hours were reduced to 56 per week in summer and 48 per week in winter. Wages were raised to 31s. One tractor and eight horses employed, the latter as two teams and two spare. Average overtime worked per week was 22 hours at 10d. per hour. This overtime was worked chiefly by the waggoners and the two men employed with the tractor. These four men averaged four hours overtime each per week, leaving six hours overtime to be distributed amongst the remaining seven men. The stock men and shepherd worked very little overtime, and consequently received very slight increase in wages in this respect. The ordinary labourer received 10d. per week (average) and the waggoners and men employed with the tractor 3s. 4d. overtime per week on the average.

If the rise in wages is considered from the point of view of the individual labourer it will be seen that the waggoner's wage had increased by 16s. 4d. per week (a percentage increase 90·7 per cent.), whilst that of the ordinary labourer had only increased by 13s. 10d. per week (percentage increase 77·3 per cent.).

5559. (4) In 1919 wages were again raised to 36s. 6d. per week and hours shortened to 54 hours. This has necessitated the employment of another man, and what is still more important, of another team. A team in my part of Herefordshire is three horses, and at present prices the price of a team is approximately £200 per annum, made up as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Interest on cost of horses (£300) at 5 per cent.	15	0	0
Depreciation on basis of 15 years ...	20	0	0
Cost of food, &c., at 2s. 4d. per horse per day	158	10	0
Small expenses, drugs, &c., say ...	6	10	0
	£200	0	0

Or £66 13s. 4d. per horse per annum.

In arranging for another team only two more horses have been required, thus the number at present employed is three teams of three horses each=9 horses and 1 spare horse, or 10 horses in all, but this increase in the number of horses adds £133 6s. 8d. to the annual cost of production.

5560. (5) With the extra team and man employed the amount of overtime worked is negligible. The present figures are:—

3 waggoners.
1 stockman.
1 shepherd.
2 men with tractor.
5 general labourers

Total 12

These 12 men working 54 hours each per week give a total of 648 hours work per week, which with 10 horses working enables the farm to be kept in a proper state of cultivation.

5561. (6) If the hours are shortened to 50 per man per week there will be a loss of 48 hours for the 12 men employed. In so far as the teams are concerned, this estimated shortage (12 hours per week) can be made up by working overtime. Assuming that the estimate of 638 working hours per week given in my letter to the "Times," of August 15th, is the minimum which is required to keep this particular farm in a state of fertility, there will be a difference of 26 hours per week to be made up. Of these hours, probably eight will be worked by the men who are employed with the tractor, having 18 hours overtime to be divided amongst seven remaining men. This will probably work out at three hours per week for the ordinary labourer and three hours per week divided between the stockman and shepherd. If this forecast is correct, the waggoners and tractor drivers will receive 40s. 6d. per week each, an increase since 1914 of 22s. 6d. (125 per cent.) whilst the ordinary labourer will receive a weekly wage of 39s. 6d., increase 21s. 6d. (119 per cent.). In my opinion this tendency for certain individuals to obtain a higher rate of weekly wages, in addition to definite payments in respect of their special duties, is not likely to arrest the feeling of discontent with existing conditions.

5562. (7) Moreover the rise of wages is not proportionate to the rise in the wage cost, *e.g.*:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Wages of 11 men at 18s. per week ...	9	18	0
Wages of 12 men at 36s. 6d. per week	20	18	0

Increase, £12.

Percentage increase, 121·2.

The present increase in wages is 100 per cent.

If the hours are further shortened the cost of wages will be:—

	£	*s.*	*d*
Wages of 12 men at 36s. 6d. per week	21	18	0
38 hours overtime at 1s. per hour ...	1	18	0
	23	16	0

Increase since 1914, £13 18s.

Percentage increase, 140 per cent.

In the meantime the rise of wages in the highest paid class—viz., waggoners, is only 125 per cent. and in the case of the general laourer 119 per cent.

It is obvious if the value of agricultural produce is to bear a relationship to the cost of production, that with a further shortening of hours the price of wheat must rise and if the rise is in proportion to the increased cost of production, this rise in price of wheat must inevitably be greater than any rise in wages and thus the purchasing power of the labourer is lessened.

5563. (8) The cost of keeping one Hereford cow is £12 per annum in 1918. Of this amount, £10 represents food and £2 wages, vet., &c. In the case I am dealing with practically all the food is grown on the farm itself. £3 represents rent and rates on the pastures, and the remaining £7 is for food grown on the farm. Of this amount, about £5 10s. is paid in wages, the remaining 30s. being for rent, manures, &c.

Hence it follows that an increase in the cost of labour must have a very marked effect on the cost of meat. The value of a Hereford calf when weaned is between £12 to £15, a sum which does not allow much margin for profit, when the value of the cow and the risk of loss is taken into account. A further increase of 20 per cent. in labour costs will increase the cost of keeping a cow from £12 to £13 10s. per annum, and this will leave a very small margin of profit for stock breeders, so small, in fact, as to endanger the future of the industry.

(N.B.—In the above calculation no allowance is made for the cost of fattening beasts for the butcher. This requires purchased foods, and the cost per animal per annum is much higher than £12, this figure being the cost of keeping a breeding cow in 1918.)

5564. (9) I hope to be able to lay figures before the Commission showing the cost of production of certain crops, but unfortunately certain account books have not arrived by post, and I am not in a position to include these figures in my Statement of Evidence.

I attach a copy of my letter of August 12th to "The Times" for information, and have marked the part which I wish to put in as evidence.

(10) *Extract from Letter to "The Times" of 12th August.*

"The books of the farm (a large mixed farm in Herefordshire of 440 acres, one-third being arable, with 20 statute acres of hops in addition) have been examined carefully, and it appears from these that prior to 1918 overtime payments were very exceptional, save during harvest and haymaking. In 1918, with the additional tillage required owing to the war, 11 men were employed, and the average overtime worked slightly exceeded two hours per man per week, except during harvest and haymaking, when this amount was largely exceeded. In this year, owing to the further reduction of hours, another hand is employed, and overtime again becomes the exception, save in the two instances above mentioned. From these considerations I have been led to believe that, provided the men do a fair day's work, 638 working hours per week are required to maintain the farm in a state of full productivity.

"This belief is confirmed by the fact that in 1918, when 11 men were employed for 56 hours each per week (total 616 hours), 22 hours' overtime were required to cope with the work; but in 1919, when 12 men are employed for 54 hours each (total 648 hours), no overtime is required. Before the war the long hours worked undoubtedly led to a diminished output per man per hour, and all subsequent figures are based on the standard of 638 efficient working hours per week being necessary for this particular farm.

"Tables are given showing the cost of labour per hour, the percentage increase in wages and labour cost since 1914, and also the increase in the price of wheat.

Year.	Wages per week.	Hours worked per week.	Cost per hour in pence.	Corrected for 638 hour, pence.	Per cent increase.		
					Wages.	Cost.	Wheat.
1914	18/·	63	3·5	3·72	—	—	—
1915	—	—	—	—	—	—	51·3
1916	—	—	—	—	—	—	67·3
1917	25/	63	4·76	5·35	39·	43·82	116·2
1918	31/ 1/8	56	6·41	6·76	81·48	81·72	116·2
1919	36/6	54	8·11	8·11	100·	118·	116·2
1920	36/6 3/2	50	8·44	8·83	120·37	140·	116·2
*1920	36/6	50	8· 7	8· 7	100·	136·56	116·2

* If one extra hand is employed to compensate for the shorter hours

"From these tables it will be seen that on the first rise of wages the percentage increase in labour cost slightly exceeds that in wages. This is due to the hours worked before the war being uneconomically long. In 1918, when wages were raised and hours shortened, the percentage increase in labour cost slightly exceeds the percentage rise in wages, but in this case two hours' overtime at 10d. per hour have been added to the labourer's wage. In 1919, when the recent change took place, the increase in the labour cost exceeds the rise of wages by 18 per cent. If the proposed shortening of hours takes place in 1920, the increase in labour cost will exceed the increase in wages by 19·63 per cent., even though an addition of three hours' overtime at 1s. per hour has been made to the labourer's wage to enable the total of 638 hours' work per week to be performed by 12 men. If another man is employed instead of working overtime, the increase in labour cost over the rise of wages is 36·56 per cent.

"It may be noted as a matter of interest that the percentage increase in labour costs is at present practically the same as the percentage rise in the value of wheat, but that if the proposed change of hours be carried into effect the increase in labour cost will exceed the rise in value of wheat by 20–22 per cent.

"It is impossible to accelerate the rate of agricultural operations, as these are largely governed by the working pace of the horses, neither is it possible in most cases to obtain additional labour owing to shortage of cottages."

[*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*]

5565. *Chairman*: May I ask for whom you appear, and what is your interest in connection with agriculture?—My interest really is that of having been connected with farming for many years and intending to take up farming myself.

5566. Do you represent any body of any sort?—No, I am perfectly independent.

5567. You are not a farmer?—Not at present.

5568. What experience have you had at all in agriculture?—My experience has been partly limited to working for the Government during the war partly in England and partly in France, and since I have been demobilised managing my father's farm at home in Herefordshire.

5569. In what respect have you been working for the Government?—In assessing the damage caused to the French crops by manœuvres of our troops.

5570. So far as your duties and interest in agriculture are concerned what were you doing?—I was assessing the compensation to be paid to various farmers because of interference with their agricultural operations through the military operations.

5571. What experience had you to enable you to come to a correct judgment upon those matters?—In England I was working at Headquarters command. We got assessments sent up to us by people on the spot, and we compared them carefully with other assessments made by other people in different parts of England and with what we knew to be the selling value of the crops, and the rental values, and the Government instructions on the subject. We compared them very carefully. It was not practical work, I admit, but we considered them carefully and came to a conclusion as to whether we thought the claim was reasonable or not.

5572. You had no practical knowledge to enable you to do that?—No, not with regard to that, but in France, of course, it was practical work.

5573. You said you have been managing your father's farm?—Yes.

5574. How long have you managed his farm?—Since I was demobilised in 1917.

5575. So that you have had a year or eighteen months of practical experience of managing your father's farm?—Yes.

5576. Does that experience enable you to write this memorandum which you have sent in?—Yes, from the account books.

5577. You have had such access to the account books of your father's farm as has enabled you to prepare these statements with which you have supplied us?—Yes.

5578. *Mr. Smith*: Could you tell us the acreage of the farm?—Approximately 440 acres.

5579. How much is arable?—About 150 acres arable and 12 acres of hops. I made a mistake in the letter to *The Times* in which I said there were 20 statute acres of hops; it is 12 acres of hops.

5580. The remainder is pasture?—Yes.

5581. In paragraph 4 you give some figures regarding horses. Do you think the charges you set out there is a fair charge to make for depreciation?—Fifteen years?

5582. Yes?—Yes.

5583. Do you breed any horses on the farm?—Yes.

5584. Are there not young horses always coming in as well as old horses that are passing out, and do you make any allowance for some to be appreciating while others are depreciating?—I think that is a question which crops up if you are breeding horses for the purpose of sale. If you are breeding them purely for working purposes, as one horse dies a young horse comes in to replace it, and their depreciation must be taken as the length of their working life.

5585. If the numbers are equal at the end of a certain period the position would remain without any depreciation having had to be taken into account?—No, because you have to feed the young horse for three or four years before it comes up to working value, and to that extent you have depreciation to take into account.

5586. Yes, but taking the early part of his working years the horse would appreciate and not depreciate?—Unless you are breeding horses to sell, I think that is purely a paper transaction. It appreciates and depreciates, but you do not get any more money for the appreciation or lose anything in respect of the depreciation. What you have to do is to replace the working horse to keep up your teams.

5587. Have you formed any opinion as to what the relationship of the State should be to the industry in future?—No, I cannot say that I have considered that from a political point of view at all.

5588. You have not considered the question as to whether the industry requires anything in the way of a guarantee from the State?—I think that is a matter which depends on a bigger political question than I can give you any opinion upon—as to whether it is desirable that we should try to be self-supporting in respect of food as far as we can possibly be. If we are to do that I think some form of guarantee would be necessary, but that is a big political question and one which as a private individual I do not think it necessary to take into account. It is a question which deals with foreign politics and other matters which are beyond my knowledge.

5589. Can we take it in the absence of any declared policy in that respect that your opinion would be that there is no need for a guarantee?—I think that if you were to leave the farming altogether alone people probably would make profits out of it and continue farming for their own benefit, but whether that method of doing it is one in the greatest interest of the nation is another question. It is probably better for the nation if you have much land under arable and so employ a great deal of labour, but I think people will manage to exist at farming whether you give a guarantee or whether you do not. The question of policy seems to me a rather difficult one and governed by other considerations.

5590. In connection with your father's farm have there been any balance sheets kept?—Yes, accurate balance sheets—fairly accurate.

5591. Would it be possible for that information to be given to the Commission?—That is a matter with regard to which I must get my father's consent. I could not give that information without asking him.

5592. *Mr. Parker*: In paragraph 4 of your evidence-in-chief you say that the shortening of the hours of labour to 54 has necessitated the employment of another man and, what is still more important, of another team?—Yes.

5593. Supposing the hours were reduced from 54 to 50 what would that mean in men and teams?—I do not think that it would affect the question of teams,

but it would mean most probably working a great deal of overtime or having another man—most probably working overtime. With the present number of horses we have got it comes somewhere between employing about a quarter of a team additional. You cannot put on a quarter of a team, and therefore it means working overtime.

5594. The question of hours is a much more important one than the question of the minimum wage, is it not?—Yes. I am personally of opinion that the hours are far more vitally important than the rate of wages.

5595. You say in paragraph 7 that the rise of wages is not proportionate to the rise in the wage cost. Could you elucidate that a little?—What I think is this: If your wages rise and you have got to employ another man the total amount you spend in wages is greater, but if the amount is being divided between 12 men instead of 11, as it was before, the individual does not receive such a high amount of your cost of production measured in wages as he did when there were only 11 men to divide it amongst. I have ascertained from some further figures I have got that the cost of wages in production is roughly 40 per cent. per man. If you divide it among 12 men you only get 3·33 per cent. per man of your total cost of production. Therefore if your cost of production is raised by the raising of wages the individual is not benefited to the same extent as the rise in the cost of production though the aggregate has risen by the same amount.

5596. What are you arguing—that the lessening of hours and the increase in the number of men is not for the benefit of labour?—What I am arguing is that if you curtail the number of hours worked and if a man works a lesser number of hours than what is a reasonable maximum he loses individually over it although labour as a whole may gain a bigger aggregate sum, and his individual purchasing power is lessened and he correspondingly suffers.

5597. In your opinion, therefore, it would be better for labour to have a fewer number of men because they would get better wages individually?—That seems to me entirely a question for labour to decide for itself, only I think that the question should be put to them perfectly honestly. You need not necessarily employ fewer men. If you have more arable land you will employ more men, but if you have to bring in extra labour to do the same amount of work then the labourer suffers individually, but if you can get more work for the extra labour then labour scores.

5598. In paragraph 9 you say you hope to be able to lay before the Commission figures showing the cost of production of certain crops. Have you got those with you?—I have them in draft. I should like to put them in to be circulated later.

5599. *Mr. Nicholls*: I only wanted to ask your own opinion with regard to this shortening of hours. You are a young man?—Yes.

5600. Do you not really think that the time had arrived when it was absolutely necessary that the hours of workers should be shortened?—I think that the old hours were too long and that the shortening down to 56, especially giving a weekly half holiday had been of immense benefit, but if you shorten the hours below that I do not think it will be of great help to the individual labourer even if he sticks to a certain number of hours per day, which he cannot do in farming, where you have to depend upon the weather. The weather is not a thing you can control. If the food has to be produced the work has got to be done, and it has got to be done when you can do it and not when you would like to do it. Therefore, the extra hours are very important when it is a question of pushing ahead. One cannot say: "There are so many acres to plough and it does not matter whether they are ploughed on the 1st January or on the 1st November." It matters very much. If the seed is not put in you do not get the harvest. Therefore agriculture is affected more in that way than is the case in any other industry.

5601. The only point in my mind is that we want to attract labour to the land and keep the best type in touch with agriculture?—Quite.

5602. Do you really think that can be done under the old conditions?—It depends, I think, upon what you mean by the old conditions.

5603. The old conditions of hours and wages?—The wages have certainly doubled since the war, and I do not think at present prices the wages are too high. I think that the hours, 56 a week, are not too long—five days of 10 hours and one day of six hours, giving the people a half holiday and not very much overtime. It is a longish day, but at the same time a good deal of it is spent in getting about from place to place, and the work is not so complicated or so dull as it is in a factory.

5604. *Mr. Lennard*: You say it is impossible to accelerate the rate of agricultural operations because these are largely governed by the pace of the horses?—Yes.

5605. I fully appreciate that, but is not the quality of the horses on many farms capable of great improvement?—I should think that is quite likely.

5606. You speak of using a tractor. I should like to know what your experience of tractor cultivation suggests. Has a tractor accelerated the rate of agricultural operations at all?—Unfortunately in our case the soil is clay, and if you put the tractor on to the soil when it is wet it usually puddles it, and the effect is disastrous. When you can use her under certain conditions, when the soil is not too wet, she is very beneficial, but she is always very uncertain.

5607. Your experience with the tractor has not been very good?—Where she is useful is for harrowing and for rolling on grass land. She is better than horses then, but you have to use her with great discretion on the arable. You may only be able to use her for two months in the year, and then have to put her on to something else owing to the character of the soil.

5608. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: In paragraph 7 you say: "It is obvious if the value of agricultural produce is to bear a relationship to the cost of production." What is the meaning of that? Do you refer to the cost of production of wheat in that passage?—I understood this Commission was dealing with the fixing of the price of wheat for another year, and I presumed that so long as there was a guaranteed price it had some relation to the cost of production.

5609. You were referring to the cost of production of English wheat?—Yes, the cost of production in Great Britain.

5610. You go on to say: "With a further shortening of hours the price of wheat must rise"?—There again I refer to the cost of production.

5611. You were not meaning so much the cost of wheat as the cost of production?—Yes. That, of course, is governed by foreign supplies and so on, but I was only dealing with it in this paragraph so far as the guaranteed prices are concerned.

5612. When you say "the rise in price of wheat must inevitably be greater than any rise in wages," are you referring to the extra labour you will have to employ?—That is one of the things.

5613. Anything else?—If I may turn back to my letter to "The Times," I there worked out the percentages. Even when an extra man is not employed, it does not quite correspond with the rise in wages, partly because the hours were shortened a good deal, and that makes the cost per hour more expensive, and the number of hours which require to be worked in order to keep a farm going cannot be shortened, unfortunately.

5614. Turning to your table in paragraph 10, I gather that wages did not increase at all in your neighbourhood between 1914 and 1917?—Unfortunately during that time I was on active service. I think they did increase as a matter of fact, but I was not at home, and I could not give you the details.

5615. Your account books apparently do not show any increase?—I could not get at the accounts with sufficient accuracy to be able to state that. There was a change in the number of hands at the farm at the time, and I thought it better to leave it out altogether rather than give inaccurate figures.

5616. You have given us figures of the percentage increase in the cost of wheat since 1915?—Yes. Those are taken from the annual volume of the Royal Agricultural Society.

5617. In paragraph 7 you again refer to the further shortening of hours being detrimental to the cost of production. You are assuming that no improvement is to be looked for by way of better organisation, and so on?—It is very difficult to see where one is going to organise things very much better than they are at present. We may get some new discovery such as a practical method of using electrical power in agriculture or something of that sort which will constitute a great improvement, but it is difficult with the present machinery that we have to see where any improvement can take place.

5618. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: I am at a loss to find out exactly what is your experience. When were you on active service?—I joined up at the beginning of the war in 1914 and served in Gallipoli and France and was demobilised in 1917 since when I have been managing my father's farm.

5619. Your experience of farming, therefore, has been one year and six months?—Yes.

5620. Do you think that experience enables you to give evidence of the same value as that which we have had from witnesses who have spent all their lives in agriculture?

Chairman: That is for us to judge as a Commission.

5621. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: What did you do before you went on active service?—I had been at the Bar for a year, and I had just before that come down from Oxford.

5622. You say there are certain farm accounts which you have, and you told the Chairman that you could not give the Commission these accounts without your father's consent?—Quite so.

5623. Do you think your father would be likely to consent, if he thought that those accounts would be of any value to the Commission, to let us have these accounts of the actual working of the farm?—I am afraid that is a point I could not answer off-hand; I did not discuss the matter with him when I got the Commission's letter asking me to give evidence, and I have had no opportunity of approaching him on the subject since.

5624. Will you be so kind as to ask him?—Certainly.

5625. Accounts such as those will be of more value to us than demonstration of the value of horses or anything else. We want if we can to get returns from various farms, and if your father will be good enough to sanction the production of his farm accounts to the Commission we shall all be very pleased indeed.—I will certainly convey your wish to him.

5626. *Mr. Green*: Your evidence-in-chief deals very largely with the efficiency of labour?—Yes.

5627. Are you aware that the land and stock management capacity of the labourer has considerably increased since 1871?—Yes, quite.

5628. Do you not consider that altogether apart from the increase in the cost of living the labourer should be paid more in consequence of his greater capacity?—Do you mean the labourer as a whole should be paid more because of that, or that the individual man who looks after the stock should be paid more because of his increased skill?

5629. I put it to you that the fact that he is able to manage more stock now than he was able to do before is one reason why he should receive higher wages?—You are referring to the individual man?

5630. Yes?—I think he is paid more, because he is a skilled man.

5631. His skill has increased since 1871 in the ratio of 3 to 6, and, therefore, apart from increased cost of living he is entitled to be paid more for his increased skill, is he not?—I am afraid I do not understand your questions.

5632. The labourer who managed three head of stock in 1871 is now able to look after six head, and do you not think, in consequence of the increased efficiency in the labour management of stock, he should be paid more, apart altogether from the higher cost of living?—I do not think so. Nowadays one man looks after six cattle and perhaps a great many more, and is probably worth higher wages because he is a more skilled man, but I do not think that affects the question of the general labourer.

5633. I asked you whether you were aware of the increase in the skill of land and stock management on the part of the labourer as between 1871 and the present time, and you said you were, but apparently you are not aware of it. Your farm is in Herefordshire?—Yes.

5634. You are going to have electric power there?—We do not know; we hope so.

5635. With regard to getting extra efficiency in the organisation of labour, are you not of opinion that the use of electric power would make an enormous difference in lighting barns and cowsheds and the utilisation of machinery for cleaning out sheds and pumping liquid manure and that kind of thing?—I think it very probably might, but we have not had it so far, and one has not had a chance of figuring it out to see what it is capable of effecting. We do not know how much the cost of the electric unit will be, and therefore it is very difficult to answer your question.

5636. You could utilise labour a great deal more on wet days if you had electric power than you are able to do at present, could you not?—We have to utilise it now.

5637. Yes, but it would give you a greater opportunity of utilising your labour efficiently on wet days?—We have to employ our labour whether it is wet or fine.

5638. Yes, but I am asking you whether you could not utilise your labour more efficiently if you had electric power than you are able to do at the present moment?—Yes, you might.

5639. With regard to your paragraph 7, upon which Mr. Thomas Henderson questioned you, I do not quite understand that paragraph. Do you mean to say there has always been a relationship between wages and prices?—No, I do not think that there has been in all things.

5640. You think that wages have always been a matter of custom?—In the past I should think that they have been a good deal a matter of custom.

5641. *Mr. Duncan*: I am not quite clear as to the basis of your calculations as to the cost of labour in these figures you have given. In paragraph 7, for instance, you contrast the wages of 11 men at 18s. per week with those of 12 men at 36s. 6d. per week?—Yes.

5642. Is that because you find that 12 men are now required to do the work of 11 men previously?—Yes.

5643. For exactly the same amount of cultivation?—Exactly the same.

5644. There has been no greater cultivation?—There has been an increase since 1914, but the staff was the same then as in 1916; it has been the last shortening of hours which has necessitated the employment of an extra man.

5645. Have you found in your experience that you require an extra man because of the shortening of hours?—That is so.

5646. Do you think that your experience has extended over a sufficiently long period to enable you to say it is the reduction in the number of working hours which has necessitated the employment of an extra man?—One can only speak from personal experience, and I agree that the shortening of hours has only just come into operation, and that we have not had a very long experience of the result of the working.

5647. Do you think it wise to base a conclusion upon such short experience?—If an experiment is tried and it leads to a certain result it, at any rate, gives one reason for thinking that the result is due to a certain cause. Although it may not be absolutely correct you have nothing else to go by.

5648. Is the quality of your labour the same to-day as it was in pre-war times or has it been affected by the war?—The quality of the labour has improved since the war has been over; otherwise it remained constant during the war.

5649. You had no decrease in efficiency during the war?—No, none. There was a little perhaps due to people being mobilised.

5650. *Mr. Hodge*: You think that the quality of labour is increasing in efficiency?—I think it is increasing because we are getting certain of the younger men back who have been in the Army, and the younger men can work a little harder than the men of 45 to 50 years of age. We have been deprived of them for two or three years and now they are returning.

5651. Do you think that the shorter hours and the increased wages will attract the better type of man?—What one hopes is that it will prevent the younger men from going into other occupations.

5652. If it prevents the younger men from giving up agriculture your labour efficiency will be on the increase?—A little except, I suppose, the proportion of men of all ages will remain about the same. You cannot turn off the older man because he has got a little less efficient if he has served you well for 20 years; you keep him on. The younger men are coming in and I think they are a help, but it is difficult to say yet what they will do.

5653. *Mr. Cautley*: You told us that the farm belongs to your father?—Yes.

5654. Does he farm his own land or is he a tenant farmer?—It is his own land.

5655. Has he another occupation?—Yes.

5656. Do you mind telling us what it is?—He is a Professor at Oxford.

5657. Is the farm run as a pleasure farm?—No; business.

5658. On commercial lines?—Yes.

5659. Your father is not a practical farmer?—Not in the least.

5660. You yourself are only just beginning to be a practical farmer?—Yes.

5661. Your father is not dependent for his livelihood upon the profits he makes on the farm?—Not for his livelihood, no.

5662. One question about the wages. I see you bring out in paragraph 7 the increase since 1914?—Yes.

5663. The percentage increase in wages since 1914 is 140?—That is on the assumption that the hours are still further reduced from the hours at present.

5664. I misunderstood that. Let me go back to another figure. I understood you to say in answer to Mr. Duncan that it took 12 men now to do what 11 men did before?—Yes.

5665. And that the total cost per week shows a percentage increase of labour of 121·2?—That is it.

5666. Is that since 1914?—That is since 1914.

5667. On the other hand—just see if my calculation is correct—were the hours in 1914 63 hours at 18s.?—Yes.

5668. They are to-day 54 hours at 36s. 6d.?—Yes.

5669. I suppose the overtime is about 10d. an hour?—No, the overtime is 1s. an hour at present rates.

5670. We have been told 10d.?—It has been 1s. with us since the 1st June this year.

5671. That is for the hay making, but the ordinary rate of overtime, I think you may take it, is 10d.?—I will take that from you.

5672. To make up the present number of hours to 63 you have to add on 9 more hours, and 9 hours at 10d. would be 7s. 6d., and adding the 7s. 6d. to the 36s. 6d. it brings it up to 44s. That is, 44s. you are paying a man now for the same number of hours' work for which you paid him only 18s. before the war. That is an increase of 144 per cent. That shows, does it not, that the wages having increased 144 per cent. the same work has cost you 121 per cent. more?—That is it.

5673. Does that show that they are working better or working worse?—They are working a little better. I think that the old 63 hours were too long.

5674. That does bear out what you said that under the new hours at any rate the men are working better?—Yes, I think that the old hours were too long, and that the men could have done the work which they did in five or six hours a week less. What I do not think is that they can go much below the number of hours they are doing at present.

5675. The only other thing I want to ask you is this: You tell us that your books show that the wages are 40 per cent. of the cost of running the farm?—Yes, approximately.

5676. Does that include the rent?—Yes.

5677. And interest and everything?—Not interest.

5678. Can you get from your books what percentage labour is to the cost of growing wheat, for instance?—The calculation I have made, if you omit the interest on capital and the cost of haulage and take the actual cost of cultivation, the labour is 41·5 per cent. on the straw crops. It is very difficult to put down definitely what it is as between wheat, oats and barley. You can get the total on all the crops, but the absolute details as between the different crops are very hard to get.

5679. Is that taken out for the present year?—No, that is for last year.

5680. Have you got it for more than one year?—No, I am afraid not. I have only had time-sheet accounts kept for just over a year. A time sheet is kept by every man.

5681. Have you got out any costs for growing an acre of wheat?—I have got out the cost of the cultivation of an acre of wheat if you omit interest on capital, depreciation of live and dead stock, and the cost of haulage. That comes to £10 18s. 10½d. If you put those other items in it comes to £13 6s. 9d.

5682. Have you got out the percentage of labour as against that?—The actual cost of labour on the farming operations I worked out at 41·5 per cent.

5683. *Mr. Batchelor*: In these costs of production which you have put in to-day, what various crops do they deal with?—Wheat, oats, barley, beans, peas, and hops; they deal also with cattle.

5684. Are these all taken from actual figures in your father's books?—Yes, these are taken from actual figures. The men are given time sheets, and these are taken from the actual figures filled in by the men on their time sheets.

5685. What year do they apply to?—1918; we have not, of course, got them out for this year yet.

5686. Have you got the actual yield per acre that has been received?—I am afraid I have not, because a good deal of the crop is consumed on the premises. It is difficult, therefore, to give the actual yield; it has to be largely estimated.

5687. So that what you have is the actual cost, but an estimated yield?—Yes.

5688. Can you give us the cost per acre?—Yes, of the crops all lumped together; not of the individual straw crops.

5689. *Mr. Anker Simmons*: Do I understand that the total cost of £13 odd applies to all the straw crops?—Yes.

5690. Not to wheat?—No, not specially. I have taken them altogether; it is very difficult to get your costs individually. For instance, it is difficult to say what the cost of carting one crop is, and what the cost of carting another is, but you can tell what the total cost of carting is. The same thing applies to threshing.

5691. In fact, in a sentence, your experience is that with the present reduced hours of labour it takes 12 men to do the work that 11 men used to do?—That is about it.

5692. The 12 men produce the same result in labour as 11 used to do?—Yes, substantially.

5693. *Mr. Rea*: With regard to this question of 12 men *versus* 11, you say that the rise in the total cost of wages exceeds the proportion of the individual rise?—Yes.

5694. If the 11 men worked overtime to make up the amount of work that it now requires 12 men to do, the 11 men would, of course, receive rather more in the aggregate than the 12 men?—If 11 men worked overtime, I think that the rise in cost would not even then be square in the case of the individual, because the overtime is not worked equally by all the men. For instance, the shepherd does not work overtime—or very rarely. The people who work overtime mostly are the teamsmen.

5695. Do you find any disinclination on the part of the men to work overtime?—We try as a principle not to work more overtime than can be helped. The men have fixed hours of labour now, and one tries not to exceed them unless it is necessary.

5696. You think it preferable to take on an extra man rather than work overtime?—Yes.

5697. Of course, the 12 men earn more in the aggregate than the 11 would have done?—That is true.

5698. But still, with the shortening of hours, the 12 men do earn a proportion of the increase of labour per hour, because they are getting the same wage for 50 hours that they previously did for 54?—Yes.

5699. And they are sufficiently well off not to care about overtime?—The difficulty is that the shortening of hours has been very largely taken up by giving the Saturday half-holiday. There is no doubt that the men value the Saturday half-holiday very much.

5700. This summer, up to the 1st October, you get 54 hours, and after the 1st October it will be 50?—Yes, and that will mean further overtime because I do not think we can use another man.

5701. As to paragraph (8) with regard to the cost of keeping one Hereford cow I do not quite follow your figure of £12 per annum in 1918. You say, "Of this amount £10 represents food and £2 wages, vet., &c.," and further on you say, "£3 represents rent and rates on the pastures and the remaining £7 is for food grown on the farm. Of this amount about £5 10s. is paid in wages, the remaining 30s. being for rent, manures, &c."?—Originally the accounts were presented in this way. The stockman presents his account for looking after cattle, wages so much; and from another man you get on his wage sheet, "Helping stockman two days," or whatever it may be. Those items are charged against the cattle as labour, but when you come to the home grown foods and work them out still further, a great deal of the cost of those is in the labour bill. If you take £10 as representing food a good deal of that is wages paid in labour.

5702. That includes the food?—It is food at cost price to the cattle.

5703. £12 seems to me a very low sum for keeping a breeding cow just now?—There is no interest on your stock and no depreciation in it, but as far as I can make out it costs £12 a year to keep it and there is very little bought food in that.

5704. How many grazing weeks are there in that?—Seven months I should think entirely in the year. It depends upon the season. You have to begin to feed about the middle of November and bring them in about the middle of December and keep them in until May Day.

5705. What do you feed them on?—Hay, chaff, and roots mostly.

5706. Can you do that at £12 a year, including the labour?—Yes, as far as I can calculate it. I can show you the accounts for last year. I make it that we did do it for £12 last year, but, of course, there is practically no cake allowed for in that. Practically nothing has been bought—no cake at all. If you begin to buy food of course you would not touch the figure.

5707. *The Chairman*: You mentioned that you had your costings for all the produce in one cost account?—As far as the straw crops are concerned.

5708. Yes, in one cost account?—Yes, but in working it out I lumped them together because one is not quite certain that one has apportioned certain things as between certain crops and in a large acreage it makes a big difference.

5709. If you could give us separate statements, making the best estimate you can, but so that the separate statements agree with the total that would be very interesting and useful to us?—I will try to do so, certainly.

5710. If you please. I suppose you have got an accurate balance sheet and probably a profit and loss account?—Yes.

5711. Does this combined cost which you have referred to, and which I have just referred to, fit in with the actual results of your trading operations?—It fits in very approximately. It is difficult to be quite certain because your costs of certain crops overlap during the year, and the profit and loss account is strictly balanced in the calendar year from January to January. The crops, of course, overlap.

5712. It fits in very closely, I understand?—Yes. The total labour cost and the costing account and the actual wages paid are approximately identical. Of course, the bills are taken from the cost account, and it fits in approximately, but it is a difficult thing to apply it to individual crops, the crops not being quite of equal duration.

5713. How is the valuation at the end treated in the costings?—The valuation is ignored in the costings; it is simply an attempt to find out what it actually costs you to cultivate the different crops. The only attempt I have made to deal with that is to put in the depreciation on the stock and the interest on capital.

5714. Your profit or your loss, according to the profit and loss account, will vary as compared with the balance sheet and profit and loss account, according to the increase or diminution in the valuation?—Naturally.

5715. I do not quite remember if you were agreeable, subject to your father's consent, to send us the balance sheet and profit and loss account for the inspection of the members of the Commission?—Subject to my father's consent, yes. I cannot, of course, undertake to deal with his private property.

5716. Quite right. I agree entirely that you could not do so without his consent, but he has given you his consent to send us the statements of the costing which you have put before us?—Yes.

5717. Also, probably you will equally with his consent be able to send us the details of the straw crops individually; those details fitting in with the total which you have got before you?—I will do my best to work them out for you, but I cannot guarantee to give you the details as regards the individual straw crops very accurately. I can give you the lump sum accurately, but not the sum in respect of each individual crop.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Mr. M. D. BANNISTER, F.S.I., called and examined.

5718. *The Chairman*: You have been kind enough to send the Commission notes of the evidence you propose to give here?—Yes.

5719. Will you allow me to make it an exhibit to your evidence?—Certainly.

5720. You are a Land Agent and Agricultural Valuer of Market Place, Hayward's Heath?—Yes.

(*Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.*)

The particulars of cultivations given below are taken from actual Stocktaking Valuations made during the end of May and beginning of June, 1919. The cost of each process is based on the actual time taken and wages paid.

The crop is, in the few cases where it has been threshed, the actual yield. In the others, it is an estimate made during the last few days by the Witness in conjunction with the farmer.

5721. (1) *Five Acres of Sussex Light Land with thin Soil.—Wheat* 1919 *after Fallow* 1918. *Wheat* 1917.

	At per acre.				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Once ploughed, 2 horses ... =	36	0	9	0	0
Twice tractor-ploughed, at 30s. =	60	0	15	0	0
Twice tractor-cultivated, at 10s. =	20	0	5	0	0
Once horse-harrowed ... ... =	2	0	0	10	0
16 bushels wheat, at 90s. per qr. =			8	8	9
Dressing wheat ... ... =	2	0	0	10	0
Disc-drilled, 2 horses ... ... =	4	6	1	2	6
88 loads yard dung, carted and spread at 5s. 6d.			24	4	0

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
25 cwt. basis slag		4 5 0
1 ton ground lime		0 12 6
5 cwt. sulphate ammonia ...		4 2 10
Carriage and applying artificial manure		1 17 6
2 years' rent and rates, at 12s. per acre per year	= 24 0	6 0 0
Cutting and binding	= 22 0	5 10 0
Harvesting	= 20 0	5 0 0
Threshing and carting, at 12s. per qr.		7 10 0
		£98 13 1

£19 14s. 7d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 12½ qrs. wheat, 3 tons straw.

5722. (2) *Eleven Acres. Soil as No.* 1.—*Rye after Wheat and Dredge Corn.*

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
Once tractor-ploughed ...	= 30 0	16 10 0
10 sacks rye seed at 88s. ...		22 0 0
Disc-drilled 2 horses	= 4 6	2 9 6
Once tractor harrowed ...	= 2 0	1 2 0
Once horse-harrowed	= 2 0	1 2 0
One year's rent and rates ...	= 12 0	6 12 0
Cutting and binding	= 22 0	12 2 0
Harvesting	= 20 0	11 0 0
Threshing and carting at 12s. per qr.		13 4 0
		£86 1 6

£7 16s. 6d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 22 qrs. rye, 7 tons straw.

5723. (3) *Nine Acres of Good Light Land on Sandstone.—Winter Oats* 1919 *after Wheat* 1918.

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36 0	16 4 0
Once Spring-time harrowed ...	= 5 0	2 5 0
3 tons ground lime		6 0 0
Carriage and putting on by distributor		2 5 0
8 sacks seed oats, at 63s. per qr.		12 12 0
Drilling Massey Harris Seeder	= 6 0	2 14 0
9 cwt. sulphate ammonia ...		7 13 0
Carriage and sowing by hand...		0 13 6
Spring work		
Once horse-harrowed ...	2 0	0 18 0
Once rolled, 2 horses ...	2 0	0 18 0
1 years' rent and rates ...	= 20 0	9 0 0
Cutting and binding	= 20 0	9 0 0
Harvesting	= 20 0	9 0 0
Threshing and carting, at 8s. per qr.		24 4 0
		£103 6 6

£11 9s. 7d. per acre.

Yield: 67½ qrs. oats, 7 tons straw.

5724. (4) *Four Acres of Good Medium Land.—Wheat* 1919 *after Mangold and Maize Cut* 1918.

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36 0	7 4 0
Once spring-time harrowed ...	= 5 0	1 0 0
Twice horse-harrowed, at 2s. ...	= 4 0	0 16 0
Once rolled, 2 horses	= 2 0	0 8 0
4 sacks wheat at 80s. per qr. ...		8 0 0
Dressing Wheat	= 2 0	0 8 0
Drilling Massey Harris Seeder	= 6 0	1 4 0
4 cwt. sulphate		3 8 0
Carriage and sowing by hand		0 6 0
One year's rent and Rates ...	= 20 0	4 0 0
Cutting and binding ...	= 22 0	4 8 0
Harvesting	= 20 0	4 0 0
Threshing and carting at 11s per qr.		19 16 0
		£54 18 0

£13 14s. 6d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 36 qrs. wheat, 4 tons straw.

5725. (5) *Five Acres, two Roods of Soil as No.* 4.—*Wheat* 1919 *after Ley Mown* 1918.

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
Twice ploughed, 2 horses, at 36s.	= 72 0	19 16 0
Five horse harrowed, at 2s. ...	= 10 0	2 15 0
Once rolled, 2 horses	= 2 0	0 11 0
110 loads yard dung, carted and spread, at 5s. 3d ...		28 17 6
2 qrs. wheat, at 80s.		8 0 0
Dressing wheat	= 1 0	0 5 6
Drilling Massey Harris Seeder	= 6 0	1 13 0
Once rolled, 2 horses (Spring)	= 2 0	0 11 0
1 year's rent and rates ...	= 20 0	5 10 0
Cutting and binding	= 20 0	5 10 0
Threshing and carting, at 11s. per qr.		10 9 0
Harvesting	= 20 0	5 10 0
		£89 8 0

£16 5s. 1d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 20 qrs. wheat, 5½ tons straw.

5726. (6) *Six Acres, Three Roods of Heavy Land.—Beans* 1919 *after Wheat* 1918.

	At per acre s. d.	£ s. d.
Once tractor-ploughed ...	= 35 0	11 16 3
Twice cultivated, 3 horses ...	= 8 0	2 14 0
Once horse-harrowed	= 2 6	17 0
14 bushels beans at £9 per qr.		15 15 0
Drilling, 2 horses	= 6 0	2 0 6
One year's rent and rates ...	= 12 0	4 1 0
Cutting and binding	= 17 0	5 14 9
Harvesting	= 15 0	5 1 3
Threshing and carting at 6s. per qr.		4 0 0
		£51 19 9

£7 14s. per acre.

Estimated yield: 13½ qrs. beans.

5727. (7) *Ten Acres of Light Land on Chalk.—Oats and Barley after Potatoes* 1918.

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
300 yards town refuse at 3s. ...		45 0 0
Once steam ploughed	= 30 0	15 0 0
Coal and attendance	= 10 0	5 0 0
Three times horse-harrowed at 2s.	= 6 0	3 0 0
10 sacks oats and barley at 70s. per qr.		17 10 0
Drilling	= 7 0	3 10 0
Twice rolled, 2 horses, at 2s. ...	= 4 0	2 0 0
One year's rent and rates at 50s. per acre		25 0 0
Cutting and binding	= 20 0	10 0 0
Harvesting	= 19 0	9 10 0
Threshing and carting at 9s. per qr.		36 0 0
		£171 10 0

£17 3s. per acre.

Estimated yield: 80 qrs. oats and barley, 6 tons straw.

5728. (8) 3 *acres* 2 *roods of Medium Land Clay Sub-soil.—Oats* 1919 *after Mangold* 1918.

	At per acre. s. d.	£ s. d.
Once ploughed, 3 horses ...	= 45 0	7 17 6
Twice Spring time harrowed at 3s.	= 6 0	1 1 0
Twice horse-harrowed at 2s. ...	= 4 0	0 14 0
2 cwt. sulphate ammonia at 17s. 6d. cwt.		1 15 0
4 cwt. superphosphate at 6s. 6d. cwt.		1 6 0
4 cwt. dissolved bone compound at 12s. cwt.		2 8 0
Carriage and applying Scatterboard Drill	= 5 6	0 17 6
3½ sacks oats at 84s. per qr. ...		7 7 0

	At per acre.				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Drilling	= 7	0	1	4	6
Once horse-harrowed	= 2	0	0	7	0
Once rolled, two horses ...	= 2	0	0	7	0
One year's rent and rates ...	= 21	0	3	13	6
Cutting and binding	= 18	6	3	4	9
Harvesting	= 18	0	3	3	3
Threshing and carting at 8s. per qr.			10	0	0
			£45	6	0

£12 18s. 10d.

Estimated yield: 25 qrs. oats, 4 tons straw.

5729. (9) *Fifteen Acres of Light Land on Chalk.*—*Wheat* 1919 *after Mangolds* 1918.

	At per acre.				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36	0	27	10	0
Three times horse-harrowed at 2s.	= 6	0	4	10	0
Twice rolled, 2 horses at 2s. ...	= 4	0	3	0	0
15 Sacks wheat at 90s. per qr.			33	15	0
Dressing wheat...	= 2	0	1	10	0
Drilling, 3 horses	= 7	0	5	5	0
30 cwt. superphosphate ...			11	12	6
15 cwt. sulphate ammonia ...			12	15	0
Carriage and applying artificial manure	= 5	0	3	15	0
Spring Work.					
Once horse-harrowed	= 2	0	1	10	0
Once rolled, 2 horses	= 2	0	1	10	0
1 year's rent and rates ...	= 11	0	8	5	0
Cutting and binding	= 20	0	15	0	0
Harvesting	= 20	0	15	0	0
Threshing and carting at 12s. per qr.			27	0	0
			£171	7	6

£11 8s. 6d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 45 qrs. wheat, 7½ tons straw.

5730. (10) *Seven Acres of Soil as No. 9.—Oats and Barley* 1919 *after Rape folded.*

	At per acre.				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Proportion of cultivations and seed and manure for Rape			27	15	10
Folding	= 60	0	21	0	0
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36	0	12	12	0
Twice horse-harrowed at 2s. ...	= 4	0	1	8	0
Twice harrowed, 2 horses, at 2s.	= 4	0	1	8	0
35 bushels seed, oats and barley at 70s. per qr.			15	6	3
Drilling	= 7	0	2	9	0
Seven cwt. sulphate ammonia			5	19	0
14 cwt. superphosphate ...			5	8	9
Carriage, mixing and applying	= 5	0	1	15	0
One year's rent and rates ...	= 11	0	3	17	0
Cutting and binding	= 20	0	7	0	0
Harvesting	= 19	0	7	13	0
Threshing and carting at 9s. per qr.			11	0	6
			£124	12	4

£17 16s. per acre.

Estimated yield: 24½ qrs. oats and barley, 2¾ tons of straw.

5731. (11) 24 *Acres of Soil as Nos. 9 and 10.—Wheat after Clear Fallow folded with Sheep.*

	At per acre				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Twice steam ploughed ...	= 80	0	96	0	0
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36	0	43	4	0
Three times horse-harrowed at 2s.	= 6	0	7	4	0
50 loads sheep dung, carted and spread at 4s. 6d ...			11	5	0
Folding	= 50	0	60	0	0
12 qrs. wheat at 80s. per qr.			48	0	0
Drilling	= 7	0	8	8	0
24 cwt. sulphate ammonia ...			20	8	0
48 cwt. superphosphate			18	12	0
Carriage, mixing and applying	= 5	0	6	0	0
1½ years' rent and rates ...	= 16	6	19	16	0
Cutting and binding	= 20	0	24	0	0
Harvesting	= 20	0	24	0	0
Threshing and carting at 12s. per qr.			28	16	0
			£415	13	0

£17 6s. 4½d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 48 qrs. of wheat, 9½ tons of straw.

5732. (12) 28 *Acres of Soil as Nos. 9, 10 and 11.—Oats* 1919 *after Ley Mown* 1918.

	At per acre.				
	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Once ploughed, 2 horses ...	= 36	0	50	8	0
Four times horse-harrowed at 2s.	= 8	0	11	4	0
Once rolled, 2 horses	= 2	0	2	16	0
17½ qrs. seed oats at 65s. ...			56	17	6
Drilling	= 7	0	9	16	0
28 cwt. sulphate ammonia ...			23	16	0
56 cwt. superphosphate ...			21	14	0
Carriage, mixing and applying	= 5	0	7	0	0
One year's rent and rates ...	= 11	0	15	8	0
Cutting and binding	= 20	0	28	0	0
Harvesting	= 19	0	26	12	0
Threshing and carting at 9s. per qr.			63	0	0
			£316	11	6

£11 6s. 1½d. per acre.

Estimated yield: 140 qrs. oats, 12½ tons straw.

(*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*)

5733. *Sir William Ashley*: Confining our attention to the production of wheat one notices a very remarkable difference in the costs shown. No. 1 seems to be about over £7 a quarter; No. 4 seems to be about 25s. a quarter; No. 5 seems to be about 75s. a quarter; No. 9 seems to be over 68s. a quarter, and No. 11 seems to be 160s. a quarter, or more, deducting the straw in each case?—Yes.

5734. With these great divergencies what lessons do you think we ought to derive from these figures?—I think that the large differences are entirely due to the different soils and the extraordinary season which we have had. Where you find the costs are very high it is almost in every case light thin soil which cannot stand a drought. My experience this year in Sussex has been that on the clay land once the corn got established it could stand a drought, but on these thin light lands where there is a shaley subsoil they have dried right out, and the crop has been to a very large extent a failure. I must candidly confess that the results were an astounding thing to me. I had no idea that they were going to come so wide apart and what price one should fix as an average price for the whole country seems to me a very much more difficult question to decide now than I should have thought it was before I went into these figures.

5735. Taking the extreme cases, No. 1 and No. 11, were those cases where the cultivation of wheat was compulsory?—No, I have taken no cases for this purpose where the cultivations are on land broken up compulsorily. I thought it was not a fair test for the ordinary routine of farming to give instances where land is put in either two or three white straw crop running, or on land which is broken up by order of the Executive, which possibly the farmer and other people may not have thought was a very wise move in some cases. Undoubtedly there have been failures on the part of Executives as there have been in the case of all other bodies. For that reason I have taken no land for this purpose which has been pasture and which has been broken up; this is all arable land, and land that has been arable for ten years.

5736. How did you obtain such figures as, for instance, in No. 1, once ploughed two horses 36s., twice tractor ploughed at 30s., twice tractor cultivated at 10s., and once horse harrowed at 2s. Are these actual payments?—The ploughing in No. 1 is two-horse work, and we consider in that district each horse is worth 10s. a day. I am taking the statutory day.

5737. Then these are estimates. You do not know that two horses were actually employed on that particular block of five acres?—Yes, two horses were actually employed on that, but they were horses belonging to the farm, so that, of course, they were not paid for at the rate of 10s. a day. They belonged to the farmer, and he had got to feed them, but he did not pay 10s. a day to anybody for the use of those horses on those days.

5738. Do you attribute any part of the benefit of cultivation one year to the succeeding year or to a succeeding crop?—No. Cultivations for wheat I do not consider leave any benefit for the crop following wheat. This is wheat after clear fallow, so that you have two years' cultivation and two years' rent and rates and so on for one crop.

5739. *Dr. Douglas*: Are these actual figures ascertained from accounts or estimates or what is their basis?—The cultivations?

5740. The cultivations and the prices?—On all those farms I make annual stock-taking valuations as at the 1st June. Naturally some are made at the end of May—some the last two weeks in May—and some the first two weeks in June. Those are the times my calculations were taken, and the prices are of the calculated quantity of work two horses and a man or three horses and two men, as the case may be, will do on that particular farm in a statutory day.

5741. That is to say both the timing of the various operations and of the financial cost are estimates?—Yes.

5742. Are they based upon records made at the time?—The number of times are, but the actual time occupied is based on the average on those farms.

5743. On the usual practice of the district?—I would not say the usual practice of the district, but on the experience of the farmer and myself as to what is done in a day on those particular farms.

5744. You charge for horses 10s. a day I think you said?—Yes.

5745. How do you get at that—how many days' work do you calculate a horse does in the year?—I am assuming that he does six days a week, which of course he does not do.

5746. Your horse cost is 10s. a day on the assumption that the horse works on 313 days in the year?—Yes, I think it is 313—or is it 312?

5747. How do you get at that cost? That makes a total for every horse of about £156 for the year?—I have taken depreciation on the horse; I do not know whether I ought to have done that or not.

5748. What have you allowed for that?—I have allowed 20 per cent. depreciation.

5749. Five years' life?—Yes, whether I am right or not I do not know. I know we cannot in this district hire a horse for 10s. a day, but whether that bears upon the subject I do not know.

5750. It hardly bears upon it, unless the transaction has actually been a hiring?—I do not think it does. The average price for hiring is 12s. 6d. in that district.

5751. Do you think that your rate for each horse day is probably excessive?—I do not think so. You see we have horses at the moment up at a fabulous price, where personally I cannot see it is going to stay, and, therefore, the depreciation of 20 per cent. I consider reasonable. We are giving 120 and 130 guineas for anything like a decent horse now. If the prices are going to stay there, 20 per cent. is of course too high a depreciation to put, but we have got prices up above what I think the average man considers is fair.

5752. I do not think I need press you on that general subject, if you tell us that this 10s. a day is not based on the cost of keeping a horse?—It is not; it is including depreciation.

5753. If I am right in suggesting that your rate is high on the other hand it would be a very sanguine estimate to say you could work a horse on 312 days in the year?—Yes, that is impossible.

5754. On what do you base your price for dung that you have charged in one or two of your accounts. If I remember rightly 5s. 6d. is the figure you give in No. 1?—That is based upon the price that we ordinarily get in valuations for dung. This dung would sell in the market at 7s. 6d. on the farm, but in a tenant right valuation a farmer does not get that.

5755. Does your 5s. 6d include the carting and spreading?—Yes.

5756. Then there is very little put on the dung itself?—Not a very great deal.

5757. You have taken it as it would be valued from a leaving to an entering tenant?—Yes.

5758. What rate of wages have you based your estimate upon?—I have based them on the rate of 12s a week.

5759. For what length of week?—For a six day statutory week for a carter.

5760. What number of hours?—For actually working with the horses in the field a 7 hours day.

5761. Is that for six days at 7 hours?—Six days at 7 hours.

5762. Your Tables do not seem to take into account anything for preceding and succeeding crops in either case. For example, if I take you to Table 4 that is a case where wheat follows mangolds on a part of the field at all events?—Yes.

5763. Have you charged anything for the residual value of the cultivations and the manuring?—No.

5764. So that really is not a complete account of the cost of producing this wheat?—No, it is not.

5765. The mangold crop would leave something?—Yes, the ordinary farmer under his agreement would be compelled to leave a certain proportion of his land in a fallow or fallow crop.

5766. Taking this as the actual cost of producing four acres of wheat that is another element which should be added to that account?—Certainly.

5767. In the respect that the land possessed more before the wheat crop than it did after?—Yes.

5768. Could these be added?—Yes: it is only an estimate, I think.

5769. The whole thing is to a considerable extent an estimate? I do not mean in any derogatory sense?—The question of the residual value of a previous crop where it is mangold is, if I may suggest it, even more on an estimate than anything else.

5770. It would depend upon the whole history of the crop?—Yes, and as to whether the farmer got a crop or not. No. 7, for example, shows 80 quarters of oats and barley for £171 10s. That particular field has never grown a white straw crop for 20 years previous to this. Whether I was right in putting that in or not I do not know.

5771. How is that?—It has always been either roots or potatoes. It is a big dairy farm just outside a large town; it has sometimes been a market garden.

5772. Take No. 12 with reference to yield. Does that appear to you to be a very low yield or how does it compare with the normal yield?—It is a low yield and this year that particular farm is going to make a very big loss. It is a thin soil on chalk and it has dried right up.

5773. This would really not be a normal comparison of course to a return of the whole district?—This particular instance, No. 12, shows very badly this year. Last year, which was a wet season, it would have shown very well. As against that, No. 4 last year would have shown a very much worse result than it does this year. No. 4 likes a dry season and No. 12 likes a wet one.

5774. *Mr. Cautley*: Is that nine quarters per acre right?—Yes.

5775. *Dr. Douglas*: Do your accounts contain anything for interest?—No.

5776. Or supervision?—No.

5777. Or for general on-costs of any kind?—No.

5778. Maintenance or depreciation of implements?—No, I have not taken interest or depreciation, except in the case of horse labour. The only case in which I have taken depreciation into account is in the horses in arriving at the 10s. a day.

5779. These, therefore, really are accounts of actual outlays in manuring, labour and horses?—That is so.

5780. And rent?—Yes.

5781. That really is the whole thing that these are?—Yes—and binder twine.

5782. So that they are not really complete statements of the cost of producing the crops?—No. I understood that you did not wish any opinion as to the interest on capital included.

5783. I am not criticising, I am merely getting at what they actually are?—Yes.

5784. *Mr. Rea*: I am not quite clear about your costs of horses, 36s. If you depreciate your horses by 20 per cent., that is practically £20 a year, taking the value of the horse at £100?—Yes.

5785. That means 8s. per week or 1s. 4d. a day?—Yes.

5786. If you take the cost at 10s. a day inclusive that leaves 8s. 8d. a day without depreciation. Do you think they actually cost that. I am taking the working days of course as being six days a week.?—I think they do.

5787. The manure in crop No. 1 comes to £33 4s. 4d. —the total. £4 2s. 10s. of that is in respect of sulphate of ammonia which we may take as used up in the first year?—Yes.

5788. That leaves about £29 of manures which last, the farmyard manure, the slag, and the one ton of ground lime. What proportion of those have you carried forward to subsequent crops?—I should think if you carried forward the lime on a five years' basis that would be right, but I should not carry forward any of the others after a wheat crop. This was put on a clear fallow for wheat.

5789. Do you think the wheat would use up all the farmyard dung and the basic slag?—I beg your pardon, I should put the slag on a three years' basis and the lime on a five years' basis.

5790. And the dung?—The dung I should not carry forward.

5791. You think that would all be absorbed?—Yes, I think so.

5792. Take No. 3, 9 acres, yield 67½ quarters of oats —that is 7½ quarters to an acre?—Yes.

5793. You have only got 7 tons of straw off the 9 acres. Would a crop yielding 67½ quarters of oats only yield as little straw as 7 tons?—I should have said not, only this is a case where it has been actually threshed and it has produced that; otherwise I should say it was impossible.

5794. Has the straw been weighed?—No, it has not been weighed, but it has been measured and I do not think there is any doubt that I am within a quarter of a ton of it. The straw has been phenomenally short this year.

5795. The same thing applies still more in the next sheet, 36 quarters of wheat on four acres which is nine quarters per acre and only four tons of straw, that is one ton per acre—an enormous crop of wheat and an abnormally small crop of straw?—These are from two farms in the same district and it is the same in both. No. 4 is not a threshed result, it is estimated, but No. 3 is where it has been actually threshed.

5796. In No. 7 the same thing applies again and even more strongly—10 acres 80 quarters of oats and barley and only six tons of straw—half-ton of straw to 8 quarters of grain?—Yes.

5797. To go back to No. 4. "One year's rent and rates, 20s."—that is the 36 quarters to the four acres?—Yes.

5798. What are the rates there?—The rates there would be about 5s. 6d. in the £; it would be one-half for the agricultural land.

5799. So that the rent would be about 17s. or 17s. 6d. an acre?—In getting at the rent of the land I have assessed a rent for the house and deducted that. This is the bare rent of the land without the buildings. The inclusive rent of this farm would be about 25s., I think.

5800. *Mr. Anker Simmons*: Over what area are these illustrations taken?—They spread over about 15 square miles, I should think.

5801. You have given us five illustrations of the cost of growing wheat. They vary from £19 16s. 7d. to £11 8s. 6d. I take it that in your practice you have to value every year on a certain number of farms the tillages involved in wheat cultivation?—Yes.

5802. Have you ever known a case where you have given or received £19 16s. 7d. as the cost of producing an acre of wheat?—All our valuations are at Michaelmas, so that we never have any costs of producing wheat.

5803. Do you think that 35s. an acre is really a fair price for a two-horse plough?—I am satisfied that you could not do it under.

5804. Would you allow 35s. if you were valuing?—We should allow 32s.

5805. For one plough?—Yes.

5806. What was your cost pre-war?—15s. We are up to 125 per cent.; that is our valuer's increase.

5807. What county is this?—Sussex, Surrey, and Kent—the Valuers' Association.

5808. What kind of wheat is this where you estimate the crop at 9 quarters to 1 acre. It must be a mistake. I have been farming for 45 years and I have never known of its being grown. I think I heard once of its being grown, but that would be coomb wheat. We will leave the question of the terms alone, because they have been estimated. I think you will agree that the cost of producing a crop, whether it is a good one or a bad one, would be the same?—Yes.

5809. Therefore in arriving at the cost of production it is safer to make out calculations on the cost of producing a crop, be it good or bad, than upon the actual results you might get in any one year?—I think so.

5810. It would not be fair to take the results of an abnormal year such as the present year, for example?—No. I think if you took the cost per acre and then the average yield per acre you would probably get a good deal nearer the fair price than by taking the cost of producing per quarter in isolated cases.

5811. Taking those 15 square miles, what would you say would be an average return of wheat—how many quarters per acre—from your knowledge?—Over the average I should think four quarters.

5812. If you add together the figures you have given us you get a total of £78, which divided by five gives you an average cost of production of £15 12s. Would you say that that would be a fair average of the cost of producing an acre of wheat on that 15 square miles?—Yes. I think the instances I have taken are about fair for the district.

5813. Is it customary in your district to manure a bare fallow?—Yes.

5814. In three of the five cases you have dung for wheat and in one of the other cases it is very heavily dressed with artificial manures. You would make some allowance, would you not—I thought you did in Sussex, but I know they would in Surrey—for the succeeding crop? There must be something left for the succeeding crop. Do you farm on a four field basis or a five field?—Four.

5815. On a four-field basis there must be something left for the succeeding crop?—There would from the slag and the lime but it would be something very small from the dung.

5816. Speaking of lime, you based your estimate upon a five years' allowance. Would it not be nearer the mark to take the average on a 10 years' basis? In my own county we always estimate the value of lime at over 10 years?—No, I do not altogether agree with you there.

5817. *Mr. Overman*: As to your ploughing cost what do you estimate you would plough in the case of No. 1, the light land with a pair of horses and a man a day? Three-quarters of an acre.

5818. Is it customary in a case of light land such as this in Sussex to fallow it?—Yes.

5819. I see, still speaking of No. 1, that you have applied one ton of ground lime at a cost of 12s. 6d. In No. 3 you apply three tons of ground lime at a cost of £6 £2 a ton? Yes.

5820. Do you think it possible to buy lime at 12s. 6d.?—I should not have thought so if I had not seen the bills for it—quite where he got it I do not know.

5821. *Mr. Cautley*: I should like to know where he got it?—It was obtained in your district.

5822. *Mr. Overman*: What is the usual quantity of seed you put on for wheat in Sussex?—About three bushels.

5823. How much do you put on for oats. I see in No. 3 you charge 8 sacks of seed oats at 63s. a quarter?—One sack an acre.

5824. And for barley?—Not very far from a sack.

5825. Going to No 11, now do you collect the sheep dung? You have 50 loads of sheep dung. What does that represent?—It is dung made in the sheep fold—the lambing fold probably. Obviously the 50 loads did not go over the whole acreage.

5826. Have you ever seen nine quarters of wheat growing?—I have seen this piece.

5827. That is what you estimated it at?—Yes.

5828. Have you ever seen nine quarters of wheat to an acre, threshed?—This is a very good piece.

5829. We should like to know the results of that head. We are very much interested in it as agriculturists, and also if you would let us know what stock of wheat it is we should very much like to obtain some of it?—Yes.

5830. *Mr. Lee-Bolton*: In No. 1 you charge 5s. 6d. a load for the yard dung carted and spread. How far did it have to be carted?—I should say 150 to 200 yards.

5831. Were those loads about a ton each?—They are yard loads.

5832. What weight would they be?—About 15 cwt.

5833. In No. 2 there are no manures or dung of any kind applied to that field?—No.

5834. Does that account for the low yield of two quarters per acre?—I am inclined to think it has got a good deal to do with it. It is rye after wheat and dredge corn after a fallow.

5835. No. 4 is a very good field. The only artificial manure it got was 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia per acre?—Yes.

5836. Nothing else?—No.

5837. In No. 5 there are no artificial manures?—No.

5838. Coming to No. 7, 300 yards of town refuse at 3s., can you give me any idea what tonnage there would be in that?—That is what he pays for it. I should think it would be about half a ton to the yard. It would not be any more—rather less if anything, I should say.

5839. In that case there are no artificial manures?—No.

5840. The yield there is 8 quarters of oats and barley to the acre?—Yes.

5841. That is after potatoes?—Yes.

5842. Have you any idea, roughly, what proportion of the residual value should be put against this crop?—This is a field that has not had a straw crop for 20 years, so that there would be, I should say, a very large proportion of residuals from this field—a great deal more than there would be from an ordinary wheat crop after fallow.

5843. Coming to No. 8, what kind of oats did you grow there? The yield is just over 7 quarters per acre. My reason for asking is that your seed cost 84s. a quarter?—I think they were Garton's or Sutton's but I would not be certain.

5844. That is the actual cost?—Yes.

5845. Then No. 9, 15 acres of wheat after mangolds. The yield there is only 3 quarters per acre?—Yes.

5846. Is there any reason that you know of why there should be such a small yield?—That is on the chalk, and it has dried right out.

5847. The rent and rates are 11s., I see?—Yes, it is a hill farm.

5848. I see in No. 10 you have "Proportion of cultivations and seed and manure for rape, £27 15s. 10d." Why do you put all that in?—The system we have in Sussex, where a man grows rape and folds it, is to reckon that one-third of the cost of the labour, seed, rent and rates is carried forward to the following year as in the nature of organic action, and in addition we charge the folding it before midsummer at 40s. an acre and if after midsummer at 60s. an acre, so that it represents one-third of the previous crop.

5849. You have only 3½ quarters per acre. Is not that a very poor yield?—Very poor indeed.

5850. Is there any special reason for it?—It is the same soil as the previous piece.

5851. *Mr. Cautley*: You and I live in the same district?—Yes.

5852. I suggest to you, you are very much overstating the average yield of wheat, and that 3 quarters per acre would be nearer than 4?—You must remember that in the 15 miles I take all that district along through Hurst, and you get double the crop there that you grow on your farm.

5853. I was not alluding to my own farm?—I mean in your district.

5854. Do you know Mr. Pratt, the threshing machine owner at Cuckfield?—Yes.

5855. In January of this year I got information, with a view to a speech in the House of Commons, to get the price fixed for this harvest—I am telling you this by way of introduction to my question—and Mr. Pratt wrote to me on the 22nd January as follows: "I have owned and worked threshing machinery and have threshed by the quarter for 50 years, and I consider the average yield is six sacks per acre." You will agree with me that Mr. Pratt is a very straightforward, reliable man?—Yes, and for the district he has threshed in I entirely agree with his estimate, but he has never gone south of Cuckfield. His brother did all the south and all along the good land under the hills where we can grow good crops. Jim Pratt has threshed nothing except in the northern part of the Weald; it is forest land practically.

5856. The Chairman of the Hayward's Heath and Cuckfield District Council is Mr. Priest?—Yes.

5857. In January he writes to say that he has taken 25 estimates and found that the average yield is six sacks per acre?—I think he is right. He covers the same district as Mr. Pratt, practically.

5858. He would go south in some districts?—Hassock's people come right up to Ganders.

5859. At any rate, you agree that a yield of 3 quarters for the district I am speaking of would be right, and where you go south you get a better yield?—Yes.

5860. In some cases you give the rent as 12s. an acre?—Yes.

5861. That is not very good land, is it?—They are old tenants.

5862. With nearly all the prices you have fixed in your estimates I agree, but as regards tractor ploughing, 30s., is not the price asked to-day 32s. 6d.?—Yes, but this ploughing was done previous to the increase in wages. Since the increase I have taken the prices at the increased price, but where the work was done prior to the increase I have taken it at the prices paid at that time.

5863. Do I understand that so far as the figures you have put before the Commission are concerned, some of the prices are on the old rate of wages and some on the new?—Certainly, according to the time at which they were done.

5864. There is nothing on the face of the papers themselves to show us what rate the wages is charged at?—No. I could of course give that if necessary.

5865. At any rate so far as No. 1 is concerned you have put the tractor ploughing at 30s., and the once ploughed, two horses, at 36s.?—Yes.

5866. As a matter of fact, on the heavy land would I be right in saying that last winter a horse was not able to work on the land at all from the end of October until the beginning of May?—Yes, that is right.

5867. So that the working days so far as cultivations are concerned are very very limited?—I should think in an average year the working days on the Wealden land are two-thirds of the year. This year it is, of course, a very great deal less.

5868. By the Wealden land you mean the heavy clay?—Yes.

5869. So far as the heavy clay land is concerned you have given no estimates except this one of growing beans?—Yes. My difficulty was this: I did not like to give any instances where a crop was grown out of what was the proper rotation. A great many of these fields had been growing white straw crops in the stress of the national circumstances for three years running, and I did not think it was fair in order to get at the reasonable cost to take cases where it would show a small yield owing to your taking a third straw crop.

5870. I do not care so much for the yield because it is the average I am concerned with, but I think your principle is right, to take the average cost of the average operations and then take the average yield. That is my own idea of the only way you can get at the cost of growing wheat. But be that as it may, taking your own principle of the average cost of the various operations to grow the crop, you have not given us an illustration of that principle applied to growing a crop of wheat on fallow in the case of heavy land?—No, that is so.

5871. Would such a crop represent considerably more than the highest of these costs of growing a crop on fallow?—You would not plough on Wealden

land more than half an acre a day, and that would make the cost very much heavier.

5872. Would the number of ploughings have to be very much more?—If we were growing a fallow wheat we should have five ploughings.

5873. You only allow here for three?—Yes.

5874. There would be five ploughings therefore, and that would be much more costly?—Yes. The first ploughing would have to be with three horses half an acre a day, and as to the subsequent ploughing under favourable conditions they might do it with two horses, but it is extremely doubtful.

5875. You have been asked about the dung. I will not say anything about it except that in my view it ought to be worth more than 5s. 6d.?—It is worth in the market infinitely more. I do not base it on the market price, but we never pay outgoing tenants enough for the dung.

5876. Take No. 4, wheat after mangolds and maize. Why do you not charge to the wheat crop some of the various ploughings and cleaning operations you had in growing the mangolds?—I think perhaps one should —in fact, I am sure one should.

5877. Clearly you ought to?—Yes.

5878. On each of these estimates you add nothing for any weeding or any hedging or ditching or road making that has to be done?—No.

5879. Nothing?—No.

5880. You have told us also that you have added nothing for interest on capital or for the farmer's management?—No.

5881. Have you formed any idea as to what the guarantee ought to be to keep our Sussex land—this part that we know—in cultivation?—My opinion, which I submit with very great diffidence, is that you cannot grow wheat in our district under 80s.

5882. Your opinion and mine coincide?—But whether you can get a guarantee of that amount is a matter of very great doubt in my opinion.

5883. You think that a guarantee of that figure would keep this land in cultivation?—I think it would; I am not at all certain as to it.

5884. But without something of the kind are you satisfied that land will go down to grass?—The land which I have in hand for owners. All the land that I have broken up I have put down again.

5885. Already?—No, I have got one field which goes down next spring.

5886. Your business takes you over a very wide district?—Yes, it is about 50 miles across.

5887. Could you tell us whether the farmers or owners are laying very heavy lands down to grass?—Yes.

5888. Are they laying the very light lands down to grass?—A good deal of it, but nothing like so much as the heavy land. The heavy land is of course going down because the yield, except in a dry summer, is poor and the costs of cultivating it are so very much higher than in the case of light land.

5889. What do you say about our district becoming a larger dairying district or a smaller one?—A larger one considerably. I would not like to say it has become larger during the last eighteen months or two years, but up till then it was increasing very fast. I should think that for the last eighteen months or so it has been stationary, and this Michaelmas I am selling out several of the big dairies.

5890. You conduct all the farm sales in the district, do you not?—A very large proportion of them.

5891. Is it your experience that people are going out of dairying?—Yes, I have found that a tremendous lot of genuine tenant farmers are going out of the dairying business and out of arable land and going in for pedigree breeding on the basis that there is less labour entailed, less worry and rather bigger profits.

5892. What is the reason that induces these leading farmers to give up the dairying business?—Partly the uncertainty from time to time as to what they are going to get, and largely, I think, the extraordinary difficulty that they are having over labour.

5893. The land is not particularly suited to dairying is it, with the exception of that part which is situated nearest to London?—Yes, that is it.

5894. Is it your view that the controlled prices had a detrimental effect upon dairying?—Undoubtedly, partly because although I thought when they were fixed it was quite a good price for the summer, as the summer has turned out it has proved to be an extremely bad price.

5895. That is as to the present summer?—Yes, and in the preceding year I think it was very much prejudiced by the fact that the price was not fixed until the last moment, and the farmer did not know what was going to happen from day to day.

5896. Has the same thing happened with regard to this winter's prices?—Yes, they are not fixed to-day.

5897. In your view has the control of milk had the effect of lessening the supply instead of increasing it so far?—Yes, I think so.

5898. If the price had been fixed earlier do you think control would have had any damaging effect?—Nothing like so damaging an effect as it has had.

5899. Have you any opinion at all as to whether it would be possible to do without a controlled price of milk?—I believe if all control was done away with there would be an awful trouble for anything up to six months, but after that—if any of us were left alive —things would straighten out and be very much better. I think that control is an evil, but a necessary evil.

5900. Could you suggest anything that would improve the dairying industry in Sussex?—If the price was fixed at a price which would show a reasonable profit. In fact it has got to show a big profit and a good profit, because the dairying business is very hard work and very thankless work. If the price was fixed at such a figure and fixed at once for twelve months—the two prices—it would simplify matters very largely in dairy farming.

5901. You agree that milk is like other farm produce, that if the price is satisfactory farmers will produce it?—Yes, if they get enough for it they will produce it.

5902. As regards the question whether the clay land in Sussex is to be kept in cultivation or not, the price of corn must be such as to give the farmer a profit, and the same with regard to milk?—Yes, unless the farmer is going to see a profit, he will do what suits him best.

5903. That is really at the bottom of the whole thing?—Yes; it is the natural business instincts which govern it, I think.

5904. Would any guarantee of cheese prices affect it? Supposing there was to be a guarantee of cheese prices so as to use up the surplus production of milk in the summer, would that stabilise the production of milk in the winter?—There is never in our district any difficulty in getting rid of our surplus milk.

5905. Not even in the summer?—No.

5906. Not before the war?—A little but very little.

5907. Before the war there has never been a shortage of cheese in this country, has there?—Not in the South, at any rate; probably there has been in the Midlands.

5908. I think we may take it that since the war the consumption of milk has increased per head as well as the total consumption?—I should think so, I have seen no statistics.

5909. I believe that is so?—I think that the more wages a man has the better food he buys.

5910. A suggestion has been made that if the cheese price were guaranteed for the summer that would lead to a more stable production, and we should have a larger supply in the winter and be able to dispose of the surplus in the summer. Do you think that would have any effect in Sussex?—I do not think it would affect it in Sussex.

5911. *Mr. Dallas*: You have suggested that if a guarantee were given it would have to be 80s.?—Yes.

5912. You have also said that the farmers and those who have control over lands are already laying these lands down to grass. Does that not show you that, in spite of the fact that a guarantee is given, farmers will act on the principle, as you have already stated, of doing what pays them best?—They will undoubtedly do that.

5913. So that even if the Government were in the future to guarantee a price, unless it was an extraordinarily high price so as to pay the farmers very

well, the chances are that the farmers will continue to go in for stock breeding or lay their land down to grass, but they certainly will not go on with cereal growing?—I think if cereals show an equal profit or nearly an equal profit to milk, the farmer will grow cereals because the milk business needs a very great deal more personal attention from the farmer than the growing of corn does. As you know, probably as well as I do, if a farmer has a lot of cows he has to give them endless attention. The difficulty of getting them milked properly has been very acute during the war. A large number of our best hands have gone. They are gradually coming back, but many of them unfortunately will never come back and it is a question of more or less training many of these men, however willing they may be to learn, how to become good cowmen.

5914. Do you think it is really worth while keeping some of this land in cultivation. Take No. 1, for instance, producing 2½ quarters per acre? I do not think it is. I think it can be turned to better use for cattle than for corn.

5915. I did not quite follow what you said in reply to Mr. Cautley with regard to the extraordinary difficulty you have had in Sussex with labour?—We have had the same difficulties in farming as of course have been experienced in every other industry. It is no use saying there has not been a very great deal of unrest not only among labour, but amongst everybody, and the unfortunate farmer has had the share of the unrest amongst his labourers as well as anybody else.

5916. Would you not say that the farmers in East Sussex are to some extent responsible for the unrest?—No, I do not think so.

5917. Are you aware that the whole of the East Sussex farmers have resigned from the Sussex Wages Committee?—I heard so the other day.

5918. Without any consultation with their colleagues of West Sussex, although they sit on the same Board?—I understand they have, but I do not know.

5919. I suppose you read the Sussex papers?—Yes.

5920. You must have read some extraordinary statements by the East Sussex farmers about the Government and the labourers and everybody else connected with agriculture?—Of course one sees articles abusing everybody else. Whatever paper you look at you find one side abusing the other side.

5921. Would you be surprised to hear that in West Sussex there have not been these extraordinary difficulties?—Yes, I should, from what some of the West Sussex farmers told me not very long ago.

5922. *Mr. Duncan*: On what principle did you select these fields in respect of which you have estimated the cost of production in your Tables?—I took farms where I had made valuations and in respect of which I had the annual cultivations already recorded in my books before I was asked to go into this question; so that I knew there was no possibility of the farmer giving me cultivations which he had not done. That is why I selected these particular fields.

5923. Would these five fields covering a distance of 15 miles give a fair idea of the cost of cultivation of wheat over the whole area?—Over the whole area it would.

5924. Are we to take it that these five instances are applicable generally to the area?—The average of them is applicable to the average of the whole area.

5925. When you stated that a guaranteed price of 80s. was necessary in your opinion is that based on the average of the whole area?—Yes. The difficulty I see in a guaranteed price of 80s. is that on the good land it will invariably show a good profit, whereas on poor land it will not.

5926. When you suggest a guarantee of 80s., is that with the object of keeping the poorer land in cultivation?—I would not say the poorer land, but the average land.

5927. Do you think from your experience that it is desirable from the point of view of agriculture to keep land requiring a guarantee of 80s. in cultivation for wheat?—I think so, if you want to produce anything approaching a reasonable quantity of wheat in England to feed the population. I look upon it that the whole thing rests again on whether or not we are going to import wheat or grow it.

5928. Do you think the figure of 80s. is applicable only to your district or that we should apply it more widely?—I should not like to give an opinion beyond my own three counties, Surrey, Sussex, and Kent.

5929. You think it necessary in those three counties and that nothing less would keep such land in cultivation?—I do not think anything less would keep the average land in cultivation.

5930. You state that farmers are putting down their land to grass and going in for breeding?—Yes.

5931. Would a guarantee of 80s. keep them from going in for breeding and induce them to keep their land in cultivation for cereals?—I think it would in the case of many of them.

5932. *Mr. Edwards*: You say you are selling or about to sell your dairy stock and that farmers are going in for pedigree breeding?—Yes.

5933. Do you think that the fact that by selling their stock they can realise a profit at the present time which they could not otherwise get hold of has anything to do with their decision?—I do not fancy so. Of course, it is no use disguising the fact that if you cash your farm stock now you are cashing it at a very high price which may, or may not last; it is a matter of opinion whether it will last or not.

5934. You do admit that a farmer who sells off his stock at the present moment will get hold of a large sum of money by way of profit which might be lost to him in, say, five or ten years' time?—Yes.

5935. Is there much land being sold in your area?—A tremendous lot.

5936. Do you think that the same reason holds good in the case of land also, that people are selling their land now because they are able to cash the value which might be lost in a short time?—I think they are selling it partly because there is not now the same social status attached to owning land that there was, and partly because the average landlord is responsible for all material, external repairs, and in many cases the internal repairs as well, and the cost of labour and materials has gone up so very much that at the price at which one can sell land say at nearly 20 years' purchase—whereas the average land has not been producing more than some 3 per cent. in the past. Therefore, if there are no social amenities attached to the ownership of land one gets out and goes into other securities.

5937. *Mr. Green*: There is a great variety of soil in the county of Sussex, and that accounts perhaps for the great diversity there is in these costing accounts?—Yes.

5938. Have you any estimates of the yield and the cost in the wonderful wheat belt south of Chichester?—No, I have not any farms down there on which I make annual valuations.

5939. I suggest that a guarantee of 80s. a quarter to a farmer on the Chichester brick earth would mean enormous profits to him?—Yes, I should think he would do very well; I should be very pleased to farm these at that price.

5940. We have heard a great deal about the poor Wealden clay from Mr. Cautley. Would it surprise you if I were to take you to a farm of 250 acres on that Wealden clay, of which the farmer came up 20 years ago from Devonshire with £100 in his pocket. He died during the war-time and left £5,000 in cash. He put five sons into farms of 200 to 300 acres, and three daughters on to a 120 acre farm. Since his father died during the war, his son, who took on his father's farm of 250 acres, has bought that farm and also the farm occupied by the three sisters. I wonder whether that would surprise you?—I am not quite sure, but I fancy I acted in connection with that farm: I am not certain, I think I know the farm you are referring to.

5941. You think my statement is correct?—I think so, and I know a similar case if I do not know that identical one.

5942. Some of these estimates you have given are in respect of farms upon the thin chalk, I suppose?—Yes.

5943. Would you say as a general proposition, that the farmers on the chalk could not pay such high wages as those who are on the Chichester wheat belt?—I should say they could not.

5944. I daresay you know the farmer as well as I do on the chalk who has been paying higher wages than some of the Chichester farmers. I am referring to the farmer who has taken one derelict farm after another?—Yes.

5945–6. You probably know who he is?—Yes.

5947. It is not so largely the land itself, but a great deal to do with the organisation of labour whether a good profit is obtained from the land, is it not?—That particular farmer has an extraordinarily good outlet for his produce in the big towns on each side of him.

5948. He has not only got one farm but he has taken about five altogether?—I know.

5949. He has taken these derelict farms on the light chalk land one after the other, and slagged them, and done extraordinarily well?—Yes, and I am sure the farmer would be pleased to come here and give you any information you want. He is a most extraordinarily energetic and able farmer, and is always very pleased to do things that are helpful in any way.

The Chairman: Thank you very much for the suggestion.

5950. *Mr. Green*: I suppose you do not know anything about the land to the south of Chichester?—Yes, I make valuations on it.

5951. What is the average yield per acre of wheat and oats would you say?—I should think wheat would get up to six quarters pretty well; it is the best wheat growing district we have got anywhere in the south.

5952. May I ask where this extraordinary yield of nine quarters to the acre comes from?—Hurstpierpoint.

5953. Can you tell us at all what accounts for the great yield?—The land was extraordinarily well done previously for his roots; it was dressed very very heavily both with dung and with artificial and it has gone right away; it is a most extraordinary crop.

5954. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: May these five examples you give of wheat cultivation be taken as representing the average for that particular district?—Yes.

5955. So far as I can make out the average cost per quarter over the five examples is 102s. 10d.?—I have not gone into that.

5956. Your average yield per acre is just exactly three quarters?—Yes.

5957. At 80s. a quarter what would that mean?—I do not suggest we are going to get another year like this again.

5958. But you have one example which is very much above the average and which would rather weight the balance in favour of the average of your district as far as it goes?—Yes.

5959. What allowance do you make for the straw yield per acre—£3?—No, I have not worked out the cost per quarter.

5960. The cost shows a rather serious loss on your figures so that the 80s. would be the rock bottom guarantee according to your figures?—Yes.

5961. Do you think it would have the effect of keeping that land in cultivation?—I think it might just do so, but as I said to start with, I have no very great faith in the 80s.

5962. Have you any figures in which you have greater faith?—I do not think I have with regard to these guarantees of prices.

5963. You do not believe much in guarantees, do you?—No, I am not a great believer in guarantees.

5964. As far as your first account is concerned I see you debit the farm with two years' rent for fallow?—Yes.

5965. Is that quite fair?—Yes, I think so.

5966. You do not spread it over?—No.

5967. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: I think you have put in one of your tables showing a yield of two quarters to the acre?—Yes.

5968. Would not a yield of that kind suggest that the land would be quite unsuitable for corn growing?—No, not in nine cases out of ten.

5969. You think that this land could be made to yield more?—Certainly. The low yield in the case of this particular land has been simply because of the phenomenal season we have had this year.

5970. I see in your Table No. 2 you do not put anything in for artificial manure or otherwise?—That is rye.

5971. Yes?—No, there is no artificial there.

5972. Is that the reason why the yield is so low?—Yes. I do not consider that this piece was done as well as it should have been done.

5973. Does not that suggest that land for this purpose should be graded?—I should be very sorry to have to do it.

5974. Why?—I think grading land would be almost an impossibility.

5975. Do you know that during the last two years quite a large area of land was compelled to be ploughed which was quite unsuitable?—Yes.

5976. Do you know that if that land had been graded is would never have been ploughed at all?—I reported on about 35,000 acres and I certainly reported that a great deal should not be ploughed which eventually was ploughed.

5977. I think you suggested that 80s. a quarter would be a reasonable guarantee?—I am inclined to think that the farmers will try and grow wheat for 80s.

5978. Did you not tell us in your evidence that farmers were going back to grass farming even with a price of wheat to-day which is above that?—Yes, to-day, but they do not think it is going to be so next year.

5979. Why not continue while it lasts?—Because you cannot change from one to the other quickly; farmers think that they are going back to the prices under the Corn Production Act.

5980. Is it likely with conditions as they are in foreign countries that we shall have keen competition for two or three years—four or five years perhaps?—I understand from friends in the States that they are likely to get an enormous quantity of shipping on the seas within twelve months and if the Yankees do what they expect to do, and what they say they are going to do, I think we are going to get prices tumbling down very fast.

5981. Is it not the fact that the populations are increasing so fast in those countries that have been exporting wheat to us that they are likely to require all they produce for their own home consumption?—The United States will probably export less but the population of Canada is not increasing to such an extent at present that the home consumption will overtake their production. There is also an enormous supply in Australia awaiting shipment and the same in the Argentine. As you probably know they have been burning both wheat and maize in the Argentine for fuel on their railways.

5982. Did you say there was a shortage of labour in your district?—There has been a very great shortage.

5983. Would that be owing to the low rate paid?—I think it was owing to the war; there was a shortage everywhere.

5984. How are things now?—The position is that the farmer is firmly convinced that he cannot pay the rate of wage which he has got to pay and he is generally dissatisfied. Whether he can pay it or whether he cannot is another matter.

5985. Does that mean that they do not pay anything over and above the actual minimum?—No. I think that the better class farmer who is doing well pays considerably above the minimum, and gets the better type of labourer. The other farmers who stick to the minimum of course get the dregs.

5986. Have you found a tendency in your younger men to leave the farms and to seek employment in other industries where the wages are better?—Up to the beginning of the war there was a very great tendency in that direction.

5987. Is the tendency now that higher wages are being paid for them to come back?—No, I do not think so. I think that the younger men are not tending to go so much, but I do not think that there is any very large number of men coming back other than those who were agriculturists in pre-war days.

5988. What is your experience with regard to the efficiency of the men you have to-day as compared with pre-war efficiency?—They are not so good.

5989. Do you find that efficiency is falling off in the older or in the younger men?—In the younger men chiefly.

5990. What is it due to—indifference or what?—I think that during the war the younger men who were exempted, and who could, of course, command pretty nearly what they liked in the way of wages, are somewhat suffering from the effects of swollen head which the older men do not suffer from—I mean men from 45 to 50 and 55. They also were getting very much higher wages and could get almost any place they liked during the war, but they did not suffer from the swollen head that one would expect a youngster to suffer from when he gets double the wages he has ever had in the past.

5991. *Mr. Langford*: You said just now that dairy farmers were suffering because milk prices were not fixed and made known to them much earlier than they have been?—Yes.

5992. Is that your opinion?—Yes.

5993. Do you think the milk producer would have been better off if this coming winter's price had been fixed in May last?—No; that is going a very long way ahead. I should suggest by the beginning or the middle of August the farmer ought to know where he is so that if he does not like his price he can get out in September.

5994. In the middle of August cake was selling at a very much lower price than it is to-day, was it not?—No, I should say there was not very much difference, was there?

5995. Yes, a considerable difference. You say if the prices had been fixed earlier it would have given greater confidence?—Yes.

5996. Mr. Cautley seemed to agree with you. I should not regard the middle of August as being very early; I thought you meant months back?—No, I think farmers like to know by the beginning of August, but I think the middle of August is the latest, because if they are going to sell or change their operations they ought to know by then.

5997. What difference would their knowing by the 1st August make to the winter supply of milk?—It would make this difference: assuming an adequate price had been fixed which would keep the farmer in, it would have induced a number of farmers who had already decided to go out because of the doubtfulness of the position to stay in.

5998. I suggest to you that it would not augment the supply of cows?—You would not split one cow into two, but you would keep more alive.

5999. Cows which were giving milk or approaching the stage of giving milk at the beginning of August would be kept for the sake of their milk in any case?—No. There are many cows four or five months gone in calf in meaty condition that go into the market, although we know it is against the regulations.

6000. I am sorry to learn that. I thought that practice was done away with, and I am sorry to think that milk producers would resort to tactics of that kind to get rid of their cows?—I do not say it is done by the milk producers. A man sells his store cows and a certain type of dealer comes in and buys anything that is meaty and it goes out of the district.

6001. I suggest to you the later the prices fixed, particularly in the case of milk, the better it is for the farmer?—Yes, if he has confidence.

6002. Because if the price had been fixed in June or July farmers did not then know how scarce roots would be during the ensuing season?—No.

6003. They also did not know that hay would be soaring up in price and likely to go to the high price that it will go to and they also did not know that cake would rise in price from £19 a ton to £26 10s. as it is to-day?—That is so.

6004. Therefore, I think the milk producer is infinitely better off if the prices are fixed later than he is if it is fixed earlier?—Yes, if he has confidence, as I say.

6005. I agree. Mr. Green put a question to you about a certain farmer who had only got £100 20 years ago and who died during the war, leaving no less than £5,000—a huge fortune for a farmer I am sure you will agree?—Yes.

6006. Mr. Green also put to you that that man had four or five sons whom he had placed out in farms of their own. I suggest to you that a farmer who has four or five sons is infinitely better off than a farmer who has no family to assist him?—That is so; he has no labour bill to pay.

6007. I suggest to you that a son working on a farm is worth as much to the farmer as a labourer at any rate?—More.

6008. He does not always want to leave off work after 8 hours?—No. I always consider that a working farmer's son is worth at least one and a half any paid man however good he is.

6009. I put it to you that if a farmer has five hard working and willing sons to assist him each of them is worth £3 a week to him anyhow?—Yes, on present wages.

6010. We are speaking of the present?—Certainly.

6011. If that is so the wages need not go out and as a matter of fact do not go out to those sons weekly?—No.

6012. The father's capital is, therefore, increasing week by week and sometimes year by year and he has the use of it until he sets one of those boys up in farming. Is not that so?—Yes.

Mr. Green: My point was that this farmer made his money apparently during the 20 years of agricultural depression. The sons could only have got £3 a week from say 1917.

6013. *Mr. Langford*: We are speaking of the future now, but if the Chairman will allow me to go into the past I would like to do that with regard to the question of a farmer with a number of working sons. I submit to you that in the agricultural years of depression those farmers who did not go into the Bankruptcy Court were farmers who had large families to assist them and who, therefore, had not large wages bills to meet each Saturday night?—Yes.

6014. If that was useful to the farmer in the past it will be increasingly useful to him now that wages have gone up I will not say too much, but to a considerable figure?—Yes.

6015. When a father sets up two or three sons in farms he sets them up on money that has been saved in consequence of no wages having had to go out?—Yes.

6016. A farmer with a big family is, therefore, considerably better off than a farmer who has no family?—Undoubtedly.

6017. If I had not been one of a family of 13 and all hard working I certainly should not have been here to-day—I mean I should not have been in a position which enabled me to gain the knowledge I have of farming. That is the point I want to bring out.

6018. *Mr. Lennard*: You said in answer to Mr. Dallas that you did not think it wise to keep land such as No. 1 land in tillage. Have you the same opinion about much of the heavy clay land in Sussex about which Mr. Cautley questioned you?—Yes, I have, with this proviso, that if you wish to produce anything like the proportion of wheat that we need in England you have got to keep it in cultivation. If you are going to import wheat by all means let it go out of cultivation.

6019. If we are to feed ourselves?—If we are to feed ourselves this land must be kept in cultivation, but if we are to run the risk of importing our food stuffs I think this land should go out of cultivation.

6020. Your figure of an 80s. guarantee is simply a figure you think necessary if we are to produce all the wheat required to feed our population?—It is a figure which I have heard from various farmers that will keep them still growing corn. I think they will try and grow corn at 80s. It is so very much more than they ever got in pre-war days that they think they can do it—whether they will be able to is another matter, but I think they will go on doing it.

6021. They will continue cultivating land which it would only be worth while cultivating if we were going in for the policy of feeding our population on home produce?—Yes.

6022. Another advantage of the guarantee is that it would suffice to keep in tillage a greater proportion of land than was in tillage in the pre-war period—say, in the year 1913?—I think that question would depend upon what is going to be the price of beef and mutton. If beef and mutton is going to stay up at anything like the present prices I do not think people who were previously farming arable land would trouble to do so now, because they can make a very good price for their cattle by grazing. I quite realise that an arable farm carries more stock than a pasture farm, but a purely grazing farm carries much less trouble than an arable farm. For that reason I think that farmers would be rather inclined to go in for pasture unless they get a guarantee somewhere in the neighbourhood of the figure I have mentioned.

6023. They would be inclined to turn the land down to grass?—Yes, they would rather produce beef on grass admittedly, perhaps not getting quite so much profit as they would if they had it in arable, but they would have much less trouble and much less capital involved.

6024. It has been pointed out to us by a number of witnesses that the important thing is not so much to maintain the wheat area as to maintain the arable area—to keep the land in tillage so that it could be switched on to wheat growing in an emergency. Do you consider that the high prices of beef and mutton would actually cause a great deal of the land to be turned down to permanent grass or will it be possible for the situation to be met by using the arable land for meat production and dairy farming?—Dairying undoubtedly will keep up the arable. The more milk we produce the more land we shall have as arable, I think.

6025. That is very interesting. In the course of your business, I suppose you meet a large number of farmers and hear their opinions about agricultural policy?—Yes.

6026. I suppose it is the case, as we are told it is with most farmers, that they feel insecure about the future of cereal farming?—Yes.

6027. Is it that they think cereal production—I am not meaning cereal production to such an extent as would feed the population, but such as would suffice to keep us, say, producing as much corn as we are producing at the present moment, or something midway betwen the present figure and the figure for 1913—but is it the case that they fear the future would make that unremunerative, or is it that they think the future of beef and mutton prices would make the production of beef and mutton more remunerative?—I think very many of the farmers have got it into their heads that when this year's guarantee has come to an end, they have to drop to 45s., unless they can make more. They have the old 45s. of the Corn Production Act in their heads. That is what is really the matter with many of them.

6028. Is it really the fact that they fear a fall in the world's prices, or that they fear the Government stepping in and fixing maximum prices which would prevent them getting advantage of the world prices?—I think they fear the fall of prices here owing to the imported corn.

6029. And that fear has been to some extent induced, you consider, by the Corn Production Act having fixed prices which fell away from year to year, going down to 45s.?—Yes, I think so.

6030. They have taken the figures of the Corn Production Act as indicating the opinion of experts as to the probable course of world prices?—I think so.

6031. If farmers had to choose between a guarantee of 60s. a quarter for wheat for four years, or no guarantee at all, which do you think they would prefer?—I should not like to answer that on the spur of the moment. It would need a good deal of thinking about.

6032. Do you think if it is a guarantee of 60s. for four years, it would make them feel they would not run the risk of serious loss if they continued with cereal production? I want you to leave out the idea of growing so much corn that we would actually feed ourselves?—Yes.

6033. It has been pointed out to us that a guarantee which lasted for four years, say, on a four-course system, is much better for farming than a shorter guarantee. A lower figure stretching over several years would give a farmer more sense of security than a higher figure for a single year?—I think that perhaps would be so with the majority of farmers. I personally would prefer to gamble on the higher figure, if I could get it. But I think on the whole farmers would prefer a lower guarantee for a longer time, although it is not a matter I have discussed with them. It is only my personal opinion that I am giving on the spur of the moment.

6034. Do you think the 60s. would give them a sort of feeling that they would not run the risk of having what was described to us the other day as the knock-out blow of a bad period?—I think it would make them think for some considerable time as to what was the wise thing to do under the circumstances. I think they would seriously consider going on. Whether they would finally decide that it was adequate or not, is another question.

6035. It would save them from this fear of world's prices tumbling down to 45s.?—Yes.

6036. You said just now in answer to one of the Commissioners, that you did not yourself put much faith in guaranteed prices even if they are high. Have you any alternative to suggest for them?—I am afraid I have not.

6037. *Mr. Nicholls*: I only wanted to get clear on one or two points. Did I understand you to say that the ploughman in Sussex was working 6 days a week, seven hours a day, for 42s.?—This was previous to the last increase in wages. In that time he would be.

6038. And the seven hours apply to the time he is working in the field?—Yes, in the field.

6039. Does he get overtime for the hours beyond that seven, or what happens?—No. I was taking it that he would work his nine hours, of which seven would be in the field.

6040. *Mr. Dallas*: On a point of order, surely Mr. Bannister is unconsciously making an error. Prior to the last increase in wages the rate for carters in Sussex was 48s. for all the hours they could work; that is the customary hours wages?—Certainly; but on this farm they were paying 42s., and this was one man they were paying 4s. over the standard wage.

6041. *Mr. Nicholls*: Did I understand you to say that in that district the men were getting higher than the minimum?—In some cases; I mean the better farmer is paying higher wages and getting the better men. The worst farmer is paying the standard wages and getting the worst men.

6042. Your suggestion was that a few of the best type were really above the minimum?—Certainly.

6043. I was not quite clear about the "swelled head" business. I did not quite know to whom that applied. Does it apply to the young men or to the ordinary labourer?—The type of man I found it applied to was the youngster who had got his protection certificate; I mean admittedly it is the worst type of farm hand. But there was a considerable number—there must be black sheep in all classes—who did find he was practically indispensable and he was protected, and he began to think he was more indispensable than he really was; whereas the older man, even if he was within the age limit and got his protection certificate, took a much better view of things and worked much better accordingly.

6044. What I wanted to get at was, was he worse during that period than you would suggest he is now?—He is beginning to come to reason again now—very fast.

6045. Because my experience was that generally that type of young fellow was a better proposition to the farmer because he had got him exempted and he held the whip-hand over him, and there was a threat of the Army if he did not keep up to scratch. My experience was the very opposite from what you have suggested and I wondered whether there was anything special in that?—No; that has not been my experience.

6046. In reply to Mr. Langford, I was not quite sure whether you have come to the conclusion that the chief guarantee which really a successful agriculturist needs against depression is to have a large family, mostly sons?—I think that is the best insurance you can have.

6047. You think that that would be safer than really trusting to the Government?—I would rather trust to my sons than to the Government.

6048. *Mr. Parker*: I want to get your opinion on one point, and I will first ask you what capital per acre is required in your district for arable land. Would it be anything from £15 to £20?—I should say £15.

6049. Then what capital would be required for the same land in grass: would it be a difference of £5?—Yes; I was rather thinking it would be under £10.

6050. £15 you say for arable, and £10 for grass?—I should think £8 would cover it for grass.

6051. It is more than I thought. Supposing a farmer has £20,000 capital in arable land at the present time and would only require, putting it at my £5 but you say a bigger difference, £15,000 for the same land in grass, it would be good business at the present prices for him to put that land down to grass and withdraw the £5,000 capital and invest it in something safer than farming?—He has got to get it down to grass first.

6052. Yes; but is not there a strong temptation to a farmer, unless he is protected by a good guarantee, at the present time to put the land down to grass and withdraw so much capital?—Yes, I think there is.

6053. Unless he is protected?—Yes.

6054. It seems to me a strong point that many farmers make so as to realise some of their capital at very good prices and have a less risky time in farming. Would that be your opinion?—Yes.

6055. *Mr. Smith*: I should like to get some clear idea with regard to these figures that you have placed before us. Do you suggest that these are actual figures of expenditure for the purposes enumerated?—I do not suggest that he has hired somebody to plough his land and paid him 36s. for doing it; because he employs his own horses and tackle and pays his men by the week, and they may be ploughing one day and doing something else the next.

6056. Do you seriously suggest that it costs 36s. an acre to plough light land?—I do.

6057. How much has the cost of ploughing increased since the war?—I should think somewhere from 125 to 150 per cent.

6058. Is not it generally taken by valuers that the cost has doubled?—No; or not in my district. I do not know about others.

6059. Would the extra cost in your district be greater than in some other districts then?—We are here in private, so I think it is permissible for me to say that our Valuers' Association covering these three Counties, had our meeting the week before last to decide on the prices to be put for this current year's valuation. After a very long discussion, it was agreed on a 125 per cent. increase over pre-war prices. Personally, I was in favour of 150 per cent., as many others were; but it was very close voting, and 125 per cent. won it.

6060. And that is the standard now taken for your County?—Yes.

6061. Is not it true that some valuers before the war, say in 1913, estimated the cost of ploughing light land at 10s. an acre?—They may have done in some Counties; I do not know.

6062. But are not there what might be termed standard works which valuers to some extent take as their guide, which lay down that 10s. an acre for light land is a fair price?—You will find some old standard works of many years ago where they say 10s.; in fact, I think you could find some where they say 8s. I believe I could find you some.

6063. You would not call a work published in 1914 an old book, would you?—No.

6064. If I suggest that there are publications by recognised authorities as recent as 1914, where 10s. an acre is taken as the cost for ploughing light land——? I should say they were undoubtedly wrong.

6065. I cannot decide between you. Still, it is a fact that has been stated.—I am quite prepared to take that from you.

6066. You have got a wonderful crop of wheat here which has already been referred to in No. 4. I see you have got 36 quarters of wheat there. On these heavy-bearing crops, is not there generally pretty much straw?—Yes, there is usually.

6067. Then can you explain how it is that on a crop of 36 quarters there are only 4 tons of straw, whilst on a poor crop of 12½ quarters for 5 acres, or 2½ quarters to the acre as against 9 quarters, there are 3 tons of straw?—On the heavy-yielding crop there was very short straw indeed and a thick plant, whereas on the other land there was longer straw and a very poor plant.

6068. It is rather a remarkable difference, is it not: 3 tons of straw from 12½ quarters and only 4 tons from 36 quarters?—Yes.

6069. Then I see in No 4 you put down "Cutting and binding and harvesting." What exactly do you mean by that? You separate them. The two are generally considered as part of the harvesting operation, are not they?—I have taken cutting and binding on the cost of doing it per acre. The cutting and binding are done by two men and a boy, or one man and a boy and the horses, whereas when you come to the actual harvesting you have to have a big number of horses and a bigger number of men and work in a gang; that is why I took it separately.

6070. What is your explanation of the fact that it takes just as much to harvest the corn per acre when there are only 2½ quarters to the acre, as it does when there are 9 quarters?—It is a question of the distance from the buildings and the hilliness of the land. Obviously, if you have a very heavy hilly district you cannot get on anything like so fast as you can with a big plain field.

6071. It is rather strange, is not it, that allowing for difficulties of that description, the harvesting of wheat at 2½ quarters per acre should cost as much as the harvesting of the wheat at 9 quarters to the acre?—I do not think so.

6072. There must be an enormous difference in the bulk to be carried—and the rickyard of your heavy crop is at the end of the field?—In fact, is in that field.

6073. It is rather remarkable that it should happen?—There are many remarkable things happen.

6074. Then in No. 9 you have down 15 sacks of wheat for 15 acres. That is a sack of wheat, or 4 bushels, to an acre. Is not that rather a large amount of seed?—Not for hill land.

6075. Four bushels an acre is not an excessive amount, you think?—No, not on this land; it would be on underhill land.

6076. I should think it is almost as exceptional as the 9 quarters, is not it?—No. I can find you 15,000 acres where they will put a sack an acre. I will show you the farms if you like.

6077. Can you give us any idea what the general impression of farmers is regarding the future of the industry; what are they expecting or what are their ideas in regard to farming in the future?—I think they are, on the whole, satisfied with the meat side of the question. I believe those prices have absolutely satisfied them—or I will not say absolutely satisfied them, but satisfied them.

6078. It would be almost too much to say that with regard to farmers?—Yes; but taking them as a whole I think they are satisfied with those prices. As to milk, I believe they will be satisfied—or perhaps I ought not to mention any prices for milk; but they are rather doubtful about milk, and I think they are very doubtful about corn.

6079. What do you think their trouble is with regard to corn?—I think they are so frightened of large imports and a very big drop in the price.

6080. Do you think then that they are expecting some help in that direction?—Expecting or hoping?

6081. Whichever you like. I am trying to learn what their opinions are?—I think they are hoping, but rather doubtful about expecting.

6082. Do you think they look forward with any lack of confidence to the future as far as the industry is concerned?—Yes, I do.

6083. Due to this uncertainty of price?—I think due to the whole uncertainty of everything at the moment. There is the uncertainty of the price they are going to realise; the uncertainty of the prices they have to give for all their feeding stuffs and their implements, and also the uncertainty of their labour.

6084. Did I understand you to say that there had been sales of land in your district?—Yes.

6085. Have many of the farmers bought their own farms?—A fair number.

6086. Would you suggest that that indicates a want of confidence; when a man is prepared to purchase his holding, does not that suggest the opposite?—Yes; but I have had some of them who have purchased who are trying to get out, which rather bears against it again.

6087. They have repented already of buying their farms?—There was one man bought a farm last year who had been the tenant of it for a very long time. I, as a matter of fact found him the whole of the money on mortgage, and only yesterday he came to me to say if I could possibly get him out again he would like to.

6088. Still, there is a good number purchasing their farms?—Yes, there are.

6089. And that would not suggest that they had any want of confidence in the industry in the future?—There is not the keenness to buy now that there was three months ago.

6090. But surely the happening the other day suggests just the opposite—that the farmers did want to buy their farms. They stopped the sale on the Beauchamp Estate?—That was nearly three months ago, was it not?

6091. No; I read it this week.

Mr. Langford: There was another one last Saturday? I have not seen that case.

6092. *Mr. Smith*: They stopped the sale and thought they ought to be given the chance of purchasing their farms?—That is one I have not heard of.

6093. The fact that farmers desire to buy their land in that fashion rather suggests to my mind that they have confidence in the future rather that a lack of confidence?—A certain number, yes.

6094. A man would not invest the whole of his capital in his farm if he did not feel fairly confident that the industry was going to be successful?—Yes: but the proportion of men who are buying their farms is very small in proportion to those who are farming.

6095. Would you say it is a fair proportion of those who have the opportunity, having regard to the amount that is being sold?—I should say so; but I should think that at perhaps 30 per cent. of the sales the tenants have bought, taking it all round.

6096. That is a fairly good percentage for an industry which is depressed and whose future is rather black, is it not?—Yes

6097. *Mr. Walker*: These statements you have put in are purely estimates, are not they?—The costs are. The work is actually what we have done. Where I have put prices against artificials and so on, they are actual bills.

6098. Would it be true to say that valuers in the different areas agree from time to time on certain scales?—Yes.

6099. And that these figures presented to us are based on those scales for your particular area?—No; these are not based on these scales. In many cases they work out very near it, but they are not based upon it. I have based these figures upon what I have found a man does per day on any particular cultivation on that particular farm, having regard to the rate of wage paid on the farm.

6100. Yes; but, of course, under different headings you would have regard to this scale to which I have referred?—I am afraid I do not quite follow you.

6101. Take No. 1, for example. "Twice tractor ploughing, 30s." Is that fair?—That is the man's own tractor, and the Agricultural Executive Committee were doing work in that district at that time and charging 30s. for it, so I based it upon that.

6102. That would be fairly clean land, would it not?—Yes.

6103. In your opinion was it necessary to twice tractor plough?—I think it was necessary to plough it three times. It is a question of whether you use the tractor or the horses.

6104. Going further down that table, you have "2 years' rent and rates." Why 2 years? I do not quite follow that?—It was a clear fallow: it is wheat after a clear fallow.

6105. Have you any particulars of actual financial results?—I have not of the wheat, because all my annual valuations in the past have been made at Michaelmas Then when this last increase of farmers' Income Tax came in, and they were charged on double the rent, with the right to put in their accounts on the 1st June, there were a certain number of fresh farmers—if you remember that announcement came out in March, I think—who said: "Very well; I want you to make accounts for me as from the 1st June to 1st June." For that reason, I have only got just the one year. There was the 1st of this June and the 1st of last June; so I cannot produce any accounts showing the relation of this year's with the previous years—not on a June valuation.

6106. Could you supply the Commission with any particulars from the point of view of an actual balance sheet or balance sheets?—Subject to the farmer's consent, which I think I can get, I could send you probably one man who deals with 5 or 6 different farms. I think he would allow me to send you the audited balance sheets of those farms for the year. I would ask him to do so.

6107. That would be very useful. Are there any others?—There are some others I could send you where balance sheets have been made out in my own office. They are not audited; but my own clerks have done them, and I think I could send those to you.

6108. With their consent, you will send those up?—Yes.

6109. *Mr. Edwards*: I should like to add one supplementary question. I think I understood you to say, referring to a particular man, that you advanced all the purchase money of his farm?—Yes.

6110. Is that a typical case of men who are buying land in your district?—I was a fool to do it, but I was sorry for the old man being turned out. It was purely on that basis I did it.

6111. But is that typical? What is the proportion of farmers who are able to buy the land?

6112. *Chairman*: I think the witness answered that. It was a very small proportion, and they borrowed only a proportion of their purchase money?—As a business transaction, you could not possibly borrow more than two-thirds.

6113. *Mr. Edwards*: Yes; but I want to know what proportion of the farmers are compelled to do that in purchasing their farms?—I should think 80 per cent. of the farmers have to get a mortgage.

6114. *Chairman*: I understand in 80 per cent. of the cases it does not exceed two-thirds?—No. If anyone came to me I could not advise them to advance more than two-thirds.

6115. Many farmers buy the land and take a mortgage upon it, but the mortgage does not exceed two-thirds In the exceptional case you mention, the farmer borrowed the lot?—Yes.

6116. Whether the lender was wise or unwise?—I do not think there was any doubt about that.

6117. *Mr. Batchelor*: With your permission, Mr Chairman, might I ask if the witness has had any experience of putting into the Inland Revenue Department this year accounts showing profits less than double rent?—I have some accounts that are going in.

6118. They show less than double the rent?—Yes.

6119. Could we have those; are they the same accounts?—You shall have all the accounts that I have got that I can get consent to put in, whether they show a profit or loss.

6120. *Chairman*: We are very much obliged to you.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

EIGHTH DAY,

WEDNESDAY, 27TH AUGUST, 1919.

PRESENT:

SIR W. B. PEAT (*Chairman*).

SIR WILLIAM JAMES ASHLEY.
DR. C. M. DOUGLAS, C.B.
MR. G. G. REA, C.B.E.
MR. W. ANKER SIMMONS, C.B.E.
MR. H. OVERMAN, O.B.E.
MR. A. W. ASHBY.
MR. A. BATCHELOR.
MR. H. S. CAUTLEY, K.C., M.P.
MR. GEORGE DALLAS.
MR. J. F. DUNCAN.
MR. F. E. GREEN.
MR. W. EDWARDS.
MR. T. HENDERSON.
MR. T. PROSSER JONES.
MR. E. W. LANGFORD.
MR. R. V. LENNARD.
MR. GEORGE NICHOLLS.
MR. E. H. PARKER.
MR. R. R. ROBBINS.
MR. W. R. SMITH, M.P.
MR. R. B. WALKER.

MR. THOMAS C. GOODWIN, Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture, called and examined.

6121. *Chairman*: Will you allow me to put your printed statement of evidence in as read?—Yes.

(*Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.*)

ECONOMIC PROSPECTS OF AGRICULTURE.

6122. (*a*) We all recognise the extreme difficulty of fixing prices and declaring an agriculture policy that will be fair to all concerned, all we ask is that the conditions of agriculture shall be made so stable, that out of its profits the worker can be assured a fair wage, the cultivator of the soil a fair return for his capital, energy and brains, and our Country made secure against a repetition of the position we were in when war broke out in 1914.

(*b*) With this aim in view it does appear to me only fair and just to those engaged in this work that some guarantee should be given (and that immediately) to secure the farmer against some of the risk of keeping the present acreage of land under arable cultivation and also to restore confidence to the farmer in the repeated promises made to him, from high quarters of assistance in his present uncertain position, which confidence is at the moment very seriously shaken and unless this is done the land of this country will go down to grass in as little time as it has been ploughed up. I would now submit for your consideration the costs of growing the most important of the farm crops.

(*c*) Detailed statements 1 to 11 attached herewith.
Potatoes: Main Crop, 1915, 28 acres highland, £22 11s. per acre. 1919, Medium Land, £53 6s. 9d.
Wheat after roots, 1914, £8 17s. 3d. Wheat after clover, 1915, light land, £9 10s. 6d. Wheat after oats, old turf, 1919, £16 17s. 3d. I would draw your attention here to the higher costs on light land with greater risk of getting a good crop and even under favourable conditions a less yield than from the better wheat lands and unless in the fixing of prices you have regard to this fact you would materially reduce the acreage of wheat.

(*d*) Cost of growing oats per acre, 1915, £7 3s. 6d., 1919, £14 5s. 3d.*
Clover hay, 1915, £4 17s., 1919, £11 13s. 9d., Mangolds, 1915, on medium light land, 30 acres, £15 19s. 3d., 1919, £41 7s. 9d.*
Swedes, 1915, £11 11s. 3d., 1919, £31 7s. 9d.*

(*e*) Root crops are, of course, very expensive to grow and the risk of growing these crops when we get an abnormally dry season like the present one will be manifest to all and this very materially affects the cost of producing both milk, beef and mutton and never was the position more serious than now.

(*f*) The question of labour is most important and I sincerely hope that the present methods of the Wages Board will not be continued. I refer to the continual alteration in hours. So far as our district is concerned the men are satisfied on the question of hours and do not ask for any alteration, realising as they must do the impossibility of carrying on a dairy farm if the hours are further reduced.

(*g*) There is another serious aspect of the labour question, the lessened output of work and the lack of interest and this is in turn lowering the standard of farming.

(*h*) The most encouraging fact to my mind is the strong co-operative movement among farmers themselves and I hope the time will speedily come when in this way the farmers will be able to handle and put on the market all their own produce and so bring the consumer and producer closer together while not driving out the best farmers as some other systems might do, I hope to see agriculture so consolidate on these lines that in the future there will be no need for a Royal Commission or in fact any other commission.

* Corrected figures.

Table No. 1.

Cost of growing Main Crop Potatoes, 1919.

Cost per acre.

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	2	10	3
After oat stubble ploughing (Autumn)	1	10	0
Cross ploughing (Spring)	1	10	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	7	6
Cultivating (twice)	0	15	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	7	6
Drilling	0	15	0
Manure, 20 tons at 15s.	15	0	0
Carting, 2s. 6d. per ton and spreading	3	0	0
Artificial Manures.			
Five cwt. sup., one cwt. sulphate of am.	2	10	0
Sowing artificials	0	5	0
Potato seed—15 cwt. per acre at £12 per ton	9	0	0
Boxing, holeing and planting	1	15	0
Covering	0	15	0
Harrowing down	0	5	0
Scuffling	0	10	0
Hoeing	0	4	0
Scuffling	0	10	0
Top dress—one cwt. sulphate of ammonia and sowing	1	2	6
Soil up with plough	0	15	0
*Sifting and hoeing	6	0	0
Riddling and putting in pit	6	0	0
Bagging, weighing and delivery	4	10	0
	£59	16	0

P.S.—Where sold off field the last three items would be merged and reduced to £10, thus reducing total cost per acre to £53 6s. 9d.

Table No. 2.

Cost per Acre Main Crop Potatoes, 1915.

	£	s.	d.
Rents and rates	1	8	0
After clover ley manuring			
Twenty tons per acre—5s. per ton	5	0	0
Carting and spreading	1	10	0
Ploughing (Autumn)	0	12	0
Cross ploughing (Spring)	0	12	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	3	6
Cultivating (twice)	0	9	0
Harrowing (once)	0	1	9
Drilling	0	5	0
Artificial manures 5 cwt. superphosphate and 1 sulphate	1	3	9
Sowing	0	2	0
Potato seeds 15 cwt. at £5 per ton	3	15	0
Planting	0	5	0
Covering	0	5	0
Harrowing down	0	2	0
Scuffling (twice)	0	5	0
Hoeing	0	1	0
Top dress 1 cwt. sulphate ammonia and sowing	0	11	0
Soil up with plough	0	5	0
Lifting and hodding	3	15	0
Weighing and delivering	2	0	0
	£22	11	0

Table No. 3.

Cost per acre of Wheat-growing, 1914.

Henhull Grange.—Wheat after Roots.

	£	s.	d.
Ploughing	0	12	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	3	0
Drilling	0	2	0
Harrowing (once)	0	1	6
Seed (3 bus.)	0	18	0
Harrowing and rolling (spring)	0	3	0
Weeding	0	0	6
Rent and rates, etc.	2	7	3
Harvesting	1	0	0
Threshing	1	0	0
Marketing	0	5	0
	6	12	3
Add manurial residue from root crop	1	15	0
	£8	17	3

* One acre got in a day. 1 man, 2 horses, 10 pickers.

P.S.—After clover ley the cost would be reduced £1 per acre. After oat stubble old turf the cost would be reduced 25s. per acre.

Table No. 4.

Cost per acre Wheat-growing, 1915.

Stoke Grange.—Wheat after Clover.

	£	s.	d.
Manure, farmyard, 10 ton at 5s.	2	10	0
Carting and spreading	0	17	6
Ploughing	0	10	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	3	0
Drilling	0	2	0
Harrowing (once)	0	1	6
Seed (3 bus.)	1	0	0
Harrowing and rolling (spring)	0	3	0
Weeding	0	0	6
One cwt. sulphate of ammonia and sowing	0	10	0
Harvesting	1	0	0
Threshing	1	0	0
Marketing	0	5	0
Rent and rates	1	8	0
	£9	10	6

Table No. 5.

Cost per acre Wheat-growing, 1919.

Leighton Grange.—Wheat after Oats, old Turf.

	£	s.	d.
Cleaning stubble	2	0	0
Ploughing	1	10	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	8	0
Drilling	0	5	0
Harrowing (once)	0	4	0
Seed (3 bus.)	2	10	0
Harrowing and rolling (spring)	0	9	0
Weeding	0	1	0
Manures, 4 cwt. slag, 1 cwt. sulphate of ammonia	1	15	0
Sowing artificials	0	5	0
Rent and rates	2	10	3
Harvesting	2	10	0
Threshing	2	0	0
Marketing	0	15	0
	£16	17	3

Table No. 6.

Cost per acre of growing Oats, 1915.

Oats after Roots.

	£	s.	d.
Rents and rates	1	8	0
Ploughing	0	12	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	3	0
Drilling	0	2	0
Harrowing (once)	0	1	6
Rolling	0	1	6
Seed (5 bus.)	1	10	0
Weeding	0	0	6
Harvesting	1	0	0
Threshing	1	0	0
Marketing	0	5	0
	6	3	6
Add manurial residue from root crop equal to	1	0	0
	£7	3	6

P.S.—If grown after clover ley the cost would be slightly less.

This cost would also apply to barley except that where roots are fed off with sheep the manurial residue would be higher, and raise the cost in proportion.

Table No. 7.

Cost per acre of growing Oats, 1919.

Oats after Roots.

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	2	10	3
Ploughing	1	10	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	8	0
Drilling	0	5	0
Harrowing and rolling	0	9	0
Seed (5 bus.)	2	16	0
Weeding	0	1	0
Harvesting	2	10	0
Threshing	2	0	0
Marketing	0	15	0
	£13	4	3
Add manurial residue	1	1	0
	£14	5	3

P.S.—If grown after clover ley the cost per acre would be reduced 20s. per acre.

Table No. 8.

Cost of growing Clover Hay, 1915.

	£	s.	d.
Seeds for 1 or 2 years' ley	0	15	0
Sowing, harrowing and rolling	0	3	0
Cutting and harvesting	1	5	0
Artificial manure, 5 cwt. superphosphate, 1 sulphate of ammonia (including sowing)	1	6	0
Rent, rates	1	8	0
	£4	17	0

Table No. 9.

Cost per acre of growing Clover, 1919.

	£	s.	d.
Seeds—1 or 2 years' ley	3	0	0
Sowing, harrowing and rolling	0	8	6
Artificial manures and sowing—5 cwt. superphosphate and 1 cwt. sulphate of ammonia	2	15	0
Cutting and harvesting	3	0	0
Rent and rates	2	10	3
	£11	13	9

Table No. 10.

Cost per acre of growing Mangolds, 1915.

Stoke Grange—30 acres.

	£	s.	d.
Rent and rates	1	8	0
Ploughing out of stubble (autumn)	0	12	0
Manure (20 tons per acre at 5s.)	5	0	0
Carting and spreading	1	5	0
Cross-ploughing	0	12	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	3	0
Cultivating (twice)	0	9	0
Harrowing (once)	0	1	5
Rolling (twice)	0	3	6
Drilling	0	5	0
Artificial Manures and Sowing.			
5 cwt. superphosphate and 1 cwt. sulphate of ammonia	1	5	0
Seed (10 lb. to acre at 1s.)	0	10	0
Sowing	0	2	0
Rolling	0	2	0
Scuffling (side-hoeing)	0	3	0
Scuffling (twice)	0	6	0
Hoeing and thinning	0	15	0
Top dressing (1 cwt. sulphate of ammonia)	0	11	0
Topping and tailing, loading and hodding	1	0	0
Carting to hod	1	5	0
	15	18	0
Less manurial residue left for corn crop	1	0	0
	£14	18	0

Cost of growing a crop of swedes on same basis as above would be about £4 8s. per acre less.

Table No. 11.

Cost per acre of growing Mangolds, 1919.

	£	s.	d.
Rents and rates	2	10	3
Ploughing out of stubble (autumn)	1	10	0
Cross-ploughing (spring)	1	10	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	10	0
Cultivating (twice)	0	15	0
Harrowing (twice)	0	7	6
Rolling (twice)	0	8	0
Drilling	0	15	0
Manure, 20 tons at 15s.	15	0	0
Carting and spreading	3	0	0
Artificials, 5 cwt. superphosphate, 1 cwt. sulphate	2	10	0
Sowing	0	5	0
Seed, 10 lb. per acre at 3s.	1	10	0
Sowing	0	7	0
Rolling	0	4	0
Scuffling and side hoeing	0	10	0
Scuffling (twice)	0	15	0
Hoeing and thinning	2	0	0
Top dress, 1 cwt. sulphate of ammonia and sowing	1	2	0
Topping and tailing	2	0	0
Carting to hod	3	15	0
Hodding and strawing	1	5	0
	£42	8	9
Less manurial residue left for corn crop	1	1	0
	£41	7	9

P.S.—Cost of growing crop of swedes on same basis would be about £10 per acre less than above.

[*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*]

6123. *The Chairman*: I will ask Mr. Walker to commence the questions to you on your evidence-in-chief?—Before you proceed to do that might I call your attention to one or two slight mistakes in the figures in the statement I have handed to you?

6124. Certainly?—In paragraph (*d*) you will find the cost of growing oats per acre in 1919 stands at £16 4s. 3d. You will find, according to the detailed costs in Table No. 7, that it should be £14 5s. 3d. Then, again, under the heading of "Mangolds, 1919" it should be £41 7s. 9d. where you have got £42 8s. 9d. You will find that borne out by the detailed costs. The same applies in the case of swedes: it should be £31 7s. 9d. where you have got £32 8s. 9d.

6125. *Mr. Walker*: Of course you are a farmer?—Yes

6126. How many acres do you farm?—200 acres at the present time.

6127. You are a tenant farmer I take it?—I am owner and occupier.

6128. Would you briefly explain and define a policy that would be "fair to all concerned." Those are your words in paragraph (*a*). Would you define what you consider to be a fair policy to all concerned?—By that I mean a fair price to the producer and also a fair price to the consumer.

6129. That does not take us far so far as a policy is concerned. What would you suggest to secure that which you have just mentioned as a policy?—If you go a little further on you will find that as far as farmers are concerned I strongly favour a strong co-operative movement

6130. We will come to that in a moment. What is the policy you have at the back of your mind that you mention here? What I am aiming at there is securing the fixing of prices—and I take it that is the chief object which is in view—on such a basis that will allow to the producer and the workers employed a fair return for their energy and labour and capital, and also what will be fair to the man who has to consume the produce. I think it is obvious to anyone reading the paragraph that that is the intention.

6131. You are a dairy farmer, I take it?—Yes, at the present time, but I have had considerable experience in all classes of farming. Up to the year 1915 I was a very large producer of milk on a mixed farm. Then I farmed a large arable farm of 764 acres, with 440 acres on the plough. I was turned out of

that by the War Office, who took 300 acres for an aerodrome. I then bought a farm of my own. The 764 acre farm was at Stoke Grange in Shropshire.

6132. From that wide experience do you consider we can produce sufficient cereals in this country for home requirements, independent of foreign imports?—We can greatly increase the present production if sufficient capital and enterprise were employed in agriculture.

6133. You think that we could do it?—I do not think we could absolutely clear it, but I do think we could greatly increase the present production.

6134. Could we do it in time?—A great deal depends upon the methods that are carried out for the encouragement of the man to do it. It is a very difficult matter to tell what we can do.

6135. Could you suggest any method whereby it could be done?—At the present time we certainly need a great deal more encouragement and a great deal more confidence given to us to cover some of the risk we have.

6136. In what way?—The risk on the arable farm is very great at the present time chiefly owing to the rise in the cost of labour and everything connected with the production of cereals.

6137. What guarantee do you ask for? You refer in paragraph (*b*) to some guarantee?—Certainly, nothing below the present guarantee; I think it should be over the present guarantee. Of course we cannot tell what the cost and the conditions of labour are going to be in the future, but in the present circumstances it certainly should be over the present guarantee.

6138. Do you mean your confidence is shaken in the stability, as it were, of the industry itself?—I think that the confidence of the farmers generally is shaken to some extent owing to the fact that they are not sure as to what is going to take place in the future in respect to the cereal crops, because, as is obvious to anyone, there is a greater risk in the growing of cereals owing to the seasons and all the rest of it than there is in some other methods of farming.

6139. Your confidence seems to be shaken anyhow in the apparent promises of the Government?—At the present time we have nothing very definite as to the future, have we?

6140. I think you will agree that farming during the past few years has been very remunerative?—It has certainly been better than ever before, but up to the time the war broke out I do not think the agriculturist has ever had a sufficient return on his capital. In respect of the production of milk, I may say I supplied the Liverpool hospitals and infirmaries with practically all the milk they wanted. Then I stopped because my farm was sold to the County Council. I then had to consider the question as to whether it was going to pay me to continue during the remaining part of my time at that farm to produce the winter milk. My contract was for over 200 gallons a day for the winter, and 250 a day for the summer. I went into the question very fully in the Autumn of 1913—apart from the need to keep up the fertility of the farm—and I came to the conclusion at once that it did not. As a going concern with the need for keeping up the high fertility of the farm that it had attained then, it was a different matter, but simply as to the question of producing the milk and whether it would pay me better to do that or to discontinue it, I came to the conclusion that it did not and at once sold my dairy cattle.

6141. Prior to the war the industry was fairly remunerative?—Yes, but everything, of course, depended upon the men engaged in it as it did in every other industry. It was just the few best men that were, perhaps, making a living, a great many others, in my opinion, were not doing so.

6142. On what evidence do you base your apparent assumption that during the next few years there will be a tendency for the industry to become unremunerative?—If we get the prices of cereals down through the bringing over of corn here from foreign countries, of course, that will materially affect the position here, and the fact that we, with present costs, shall not be able to compete with them.

6143. Do you think there is a likelihood of prices falling during the next year or two?—I would not say that the prices may fall very much during the next year or two, but the farmer has got to look a long way ahead. He cannot reckon on one or two years in the course of his farming. He has to look a long way ahead, or he may find himself very materially wrong.

6144. In paragraph (*f*) you have something to say about the Wages Board. Could you tell the Commission how often hours have been altered by the Wages Board in your district since the inception of the Board?—I could not give you definitely the number of times there has been an alteration in the hours, but during the last twelve months we have had continued alterations in the hours.

6145. By the Wages Board?—Yes.

6145A. You cannot tell us how often?—In the first place we had them reduced to 61.

6146. When was that?—I have not the exact date, but it is within the last twelve months. Then we had them reduced to 60—I am speaking of our own country.

6147. Since the inception of the Board am I not correct in saying that the hours have only been altered twice by the Board?—I think it is more than that.

6148. I am asking you?—Are you taking into consideration the half-holiday—because that was one alteration?

6149. No, I am dealing with the general working hours?—I think they were altered about three times, taking the half-holiday as one alteration.

6150. Quite. That bears out my statement. Apart from the 6½ hours' day they have only been altered twice. Am I correct in making that statement?—Yes, I think you are, but I cannot say definitely as to that.

6151. So that the statement with regard to the continued alteration of hours by the Wages Board is not quite correct when you look into it?—From the dairyman's point of view it is disastrous that we should get three alterations of hours in twelve months.

6152. The Wages Board has been in existence more than twelve months?—Yes, but any alteration they made had not the same detrimental effect previously as it has had since.

6153. In paragraph (*g*) you talk about the lessening output of work?—Yes.

6154. Could you give the Commission any concrete examples of what you mean by that?—There is a lack of interest in the work now. We never seemed to get that lack of interest in the old days. There is also a lack of efficiency; we cannot get the same efficient men able to perform and do the work as we could in the old days. When the old men pass off we cannot replace them with equally good men.

6155. Do you think the war has had any effect?—I certainly think this was going on to some extent prior to the war, but I do not think that the young men that are coming back, or many of them, show the interest that we expected them to do in their work, nor are they as efficient as we expected them to be.

6156. Have you fewer men on your farm now than you had prior to the war?—I was not farming on my present farm prior to the war. I have more men on my farm at the present time than used to be employed on the farm prior to the war, but that does not say much, because it is under very different conditions now. Speaking generally, there are less men on the farms to-day than there were before the war.

6157. Did you read Mr. Lloyd George's speech in the House of Commons the other day?—Yes.

6158. Did you notice where he stated that there was only one industry which had increased its output?—Yes, I noticed that.

6159. That industry was?—Agriculture.

6160. That is rather remarkable in view of this lessened output statement of yours, is it not?—It may be so, but at the same time I am speaking of the great dairying county of Cheshire in particular.

6161. The Prime Minister's statement would not refer, in your opinion, to your particular neighbourhood?—It might on the whole, but at the same time you must always bear in mind the fact that the increased output is not owing to the labour that the farmer employs. To a large extent it may not be owing—in fact, I do not think it is owing—to the paid labour the farmer employs. I think it is owing to his own exertions and that of his family. A great deal of the

dairy work of the County of Cheshire is done through the small holders, who do all the work themselves and do not work eight hours a day but 16. In many cases farmers have three or four sons or daughters, and they all help in the dairy work. That is where the increase has come, to a large extent, during the past year or two I think. Farmers and their sons and daughters have done their utmost in the dairying industry to produce all they possibly could. That, in my opinion, is where the increase has come, and not from the labour employed and paid.

6162. In paragraph (h) you refer to a co-operative movement?—Yes.

6163. Do you mean by that there ought to be more co-operation amongst the farming community from the point of view of even buying and selling?—Yes.

6164. Would you extend that to the use of machinery also?—Do you mean in the purchase of machinery?

6165. Yes?—Certainly, in the purchase of machinery.

6166. And the use of it?—Yes.

6167. You think it would be a good thing for the industry?—Yes. The tendency is in that direction all the time.

6168. Have you any other suggestion to make to the Commission as to anything that might be beneficial or helpful to the industry from the point of view of improvement?—I think that the chief hope for agriculture is in the method I have suggested—co-operation—among the farmers themselves in dealing with their own produce and bringing it to the consumer without the extra expense on it of the middleman, still reserving the personal element in the farming. If you get co-operation on somewhat different lines in connection with the industrial co-operative societies, and you get bailiffs or managers put into the farms where the co-operative societies buy up the estates, and that sort of thing, it nearly always follows that you get a decreased production because you drive out some of the better farmers and the personal element on the farms. The better farmers do not stay on as managers under the C.W.S.

6169. Could you give us any particular instances of what you have in your mind?—We have one or two farms in our district that are now farmed by the C.W.S. where the production has very much decreased and the farms have very much deteriorated.

6170. In your neighbourhood?—In my neighbourhood—as a result of managers being put in. Of course you never get quite the same man under that system.

6171. Have you any other suggestions?—No, I have no other that I can state just straight off.

6172. Apart from co-operation you have no other suggestions to make?—No, not just at the moment.

6173. What about transport?—The question of transport will be dealt with by Mr. Sadler. I do not want to touch upon questions that he will deal with, but I think there is great improvement possible in connection with transport.

6174. *Mr. Smith*: To go to your paragraph where you speak of the lack of interest on the part of the farm labourer, is it a growing feature?—It has been very much more noticable in the last year or so, especially in the last nine months.

6175. Is there a tendency for men to lose interest in the industry?—That is what it appears to us to be to some extent.

6176. Do they leave the industry?—Do you mean leave the industry to go to towns?

6177. Yes?—Yes, in some cases we get them leaving to go to the towns.

6178. You have large industrial centres in close proximity to you, have you not?—Yes.

6179. I was wondering whether the lack of interest in agriculture which you suggest was due to the fact that there are other attractions which take the men away from the industry?—Of course where I am now, I am close to Crewe, the great railway works, and I think there is something of the kind in that immediate neighbourhood, but as a matter of fact, as far as labour itself is concerned, I think there has been more trouble and unrest in other parts of the county away from the industrial centres.

6180. Would that be because of dissatisfaction as applied to the industry itself?—I do not think that. I think perhaps in Crewe they are able to get a little more money in some cases and they do not value the extra that they would get when they are employed on the farms.

6181. There must be some explanation of this lack of interest, and I am rather anxious to know what it is—whether it is due to an attraction by other industries which tempts the men away from agriculture, and therefore does not impress their minds with the necessity of looking upon agriculture as their life's work, or whether it is due to some other reason?—I think one of the chief attractions is the fact that they have the week-ends to themselves and they have not any Sunday work in the industrial centres—that is one of the chief attractions which draws the men away.

6182. Do you think therefore it would help the industry if the labour conditions were made as good as possible in order to retain the workmen and retain their interest?—I believe it is all to the benefit of the industry that we should pay the best wages we possibly can and make the conditions as good as they can be made.

6183. Do you think this matter of interest is due to the abnormal circumstances through which the nation has passed?—I think that has something to do with it.

6184. Therefore in that respect it may be only temporary?—Yes, it may be only temporary.

6185. Coming to the figures you have set out here it looks as though the rent of the land must have increased very substantially. I do not know whether we are comparing the same figures, but take example 2—rent and rates on the main crop of potatoes, £1 8s.—and example 1, which is £2 10s. 3d.?—That is owing to the fact that these are taken on my own farms. In 1916, I was farming the large farm of 764 acres at less rent than the one I am farming now—a different rent altogether.

6186. This is not a comparative statement on the same farm?—No, it is the costs as they presented themselves to me on the two different farms.

6187. That makes it rather difficult to compare these figures to get a proper comparison. It ought to have been on the same farm, because the conditions might be quite different on the two farms as to soil and things of that kind?—It would not have been fair for me to put the rent the same when I was on a different farm at a less rent.

6188. If it is a statement of fact nobody could take exception to it. My point is that to make a comparison one would naturally conclude this referred to the same farm?—No, it does not refer to the same farm, but that only makes practically one point different. The greater increase comes from other factors.

6189. £1 2s. 6d. increase per acre from the point of view of rent is a rather substantial increase?—If I had put the rent the same on the light land farms it would have made the result worse, because the cost of producing on the lighter land is heavier than on the heavier lands for certain particular crops.

6190. What are we to understand by the term "drilling" in this potato crop?—That is drilling the drills out—ridging if you like. You have to ridge the land first; then the manure is put on, and then the potatoes are dropped, and then the artificials, and then it is split and covered.

6191. I could not exactly gather if that was your method by the use of the term "drilling." Then later on you state, "boxing, holeing and planting."—The up-to-date method is to have all your potato sets boxed. The holeing is done by an implement which we have for going down the drills and making the holes and putting the seed in and keeping it in rows with exactly even distances apart and of the same depth.

6192. The usual method is to drop the potato in as you go along out of a basket?—That is out of date; that is not an up-to-date potato-growing method.

6193. I only want to know what these terms mean?—This is the practice adopted in all the up-to-date potato growing districts, because you get an evenness of depth and an equal distance between, and straight rows.

6194. I suppose the increase in labour would be one of the substantial items causing a difference in the figures?—Yes.

6195. Can you tell us what the increase in wages has been, either in actual figures or percentages?—I have not got the percentages, but in 1915 the average wage would be about one guinea a week on the large farm that I had in Shropshire.

6196. Not more than that?—No.

6197. Would that be a cash wage carrying any amount of extras?—There are always extras, which we do not count.

6198. You would count them now?—It was a cash wage; the extras were not counted.

6199. Any extras that they obtained then would not count as part of the wage?—No.

6200. They would at the present time, would they not?—Yes. I find that the waggoners on this farm were getting 22s. a week then, and the workmen 19s. On a farm like that the bulk of your work is done piece-work, and an estimate like that is not a fair basis to take it on, because their wages would increase more than that.

6201. On the 1915 figures?—Yes.

6202. Are the 1919 figures actual cost or an estimated cost?—It is an estimated cost.

6203. The cost of labour has uniformly increased, has it not? That is to say, all classes of labour have had a proportionate increase in their wages?—Yes.

6204. Ought that not to reflect a similar uniform increase in the various operations?—In what way do you mean?

6205. To take "Cultivating, twice," that has increased 50 per cent?—Yes.

6206. It has gone up from 9s. to 15s.?—Yes.

6207. When you come to hoeing it has increased from 1s. to 4s.?—On that farm in 1915, as I said previously, the bulk of the work was done piecework. To-day we cannot get the piece-work done, the men do not want the piece-work.

6208. Take your drilling, that has increased three times; that has gone from 5s. to 15s.?—Yes, and where we used to get 3½ to 4 acres per day drilled in 1915 in Shropshire, to-day we are practically getting not 2 acres in some cases in Cheshire.

6209. I cannot understand why your cultivating should only increase from 9s. to 15s. while your drilling increases from 5s. to 15s. I should have thought that the same factors would operate in each case, and the increase would be reflected in the same way?—Not at all; there are so many different circumstances to be taken into consideration—the land and the second time through of cultivating, and so on. It makes a great deal of difference. A man can do a great deal more of one job than he can of another.

6210. In so far as labour has varied, that variation would not apply specially just to one operation and not to others?—Of course not, but there is a great deal of difference in the conditions under which you are doing your work. There is, for example, considerably greater difficulty now in getting men to do the drilling work than there is in the case of the cultivating work. It takes a more skilled man to do the drilling work, and for drilling we often give a little extra on the farm for doing that work.

6211. Carting and spreading is exactly double—it has risen from £1 10s. to £3?—Yes.

6212. When you come to "Soil up with plough," that has increased three times—from 5s. to 15s.?—Yes, that is on the same basis as the ridging.

6213. Do you suggest that in these different operations in the actual cost some of them have only doubled whereas others have increased three times?—Yes, I do. You cannot take the same basis all through. These estimates are based upon the amount of work that we actually find we can get done by the men at present, and the amount of work that was done by the men in the other year.

6214. I cannot understand why there should be such a wide difference between the costs of the different operations?—It is owing to the different conditions under which we do them and the particular work at the time; that accounts for it.

6215. In some cases it is double and in other cases it is four times. It is rather remarkable? In 1915 I could get my swedes, for example, hoed twice over for 9s. an acre, and the men would do well at it. This last year we have been paying £2 an acre for doing the same work once over, not twice, and I have not based it on the £2. That is one of the difficulties that farmers have to contend with.

6216. Take Table No. 2 and compare it with Table No. 1 in the same list of figures. In Table No. 2, 1915, you seem to have two items at the finish, lifting and hodding and weighing and delivering at a combined cost of £3 15s.?—Yes.

6217. Those items seem to have increased three times in 1919. It costs £16 10s. What is the explanation of that?—There is a note at the bottom which explains some of it, but the explanation is that in 1915 that particular crop of potatoes was lifted at £3 15s. per acre at hand piece-work. The £2 covers the cost of weighing, bagging and delivering. To-day the potatoes we have to get with the potato getter, and you will find one acre is got in a day with two horses, one man and ten pickers. That accounts for the cost of £6 for lifting and hodding. It says sifting and hoeing in the print; that is a mistake, it should be lifting and hodding. You have to riddle the potatoes after that if you are going to keep them and put them in the pit, and then you have the bagging, weighing and delivering. If they are sold off the field the three items are merged in one and reduced to a cost of £10.

6218. I take it it is possible for the 1915 methods still to obtain, and does it not follow that the 1919 figures can under the same circumstances be reduced?—Yes, but where are you going to get your potatoes from in the spring if nobody keeps them? In one case they are sold straight off the field in the autumn, and in the other case the cost is shown if they are kept till the spring.

6219. My point is, if it is possible to weigh and deliver straight away in 1915 it is also possible for some of the potatoes to be dealt with in that way now, and in making comparative tables we want to be perfectly clear that everything is equal in the comparison and that we ought not to have the low cost in 1915 and all the higher figures put in in 1919 which might not obtain?—You have a note there on Table No. 1 that this cost may be reduced to £10 where the potatoes are sold off the field, making the total £53 6s. 9d.

6220. I see right through you have made the same difference in rent?—Yes.

6221. I suppose that is an actual figure?—Yes, that is an actual figure.

6222. In regard to the last set of figures in Table No. 11, I see in the comparative figures you have at the finish you have three operations in 1919 and only two in 1915?—Yes. That is accounted for by the fact that in 1915 I grew 30 acres of mangolds there which were pulled, loaded in the carts and hodded by my men piece-work at £1 per acre, and the men got plenty of money at it. To-day you could not get that work done piece-work, or at anything like the price. It has to be done day-work, and it will cost you according to the estimate here, and you will be very fortunate if you get it done under those conditions.

6223. There is a wonderful difference between the two?—I quite agree, but it is impossible to get it done at any less in Cheshire to-day.

6224. Would you suggest that the figures for this 1919 farm would be the same in 1915 as you suggest for the other farm? The difficulty is in comparing the two farms?—They might vary a little as they always do in different districts, but not very much.

6225. You put at the finish in Table No. 11: "Less manurial residue left for corn crop, £1 1s.," but in 1914 when manure was one-third of the value you charge to the wheat crop, £1 15s.?—That is rather a special circumstance. That was grown on my original farm at Henhull where the roots had been specially dressed and more heavily manured and there was more residue.

6226. You have fairly heavy manure in 1919. You have 20 tons to the acre of natural manure and then you have your artificials. You have fairly substantial manuring in 1919?—Do you mean in the root growing?

6227. Yes, in Table 11?—Yes, that is fairly substantial manuring, but in this particular case I used to grow the roots there a great deal heavier than we do now. We could not get them done under present labour conditions. I used to grow my mangolds in 18-inch drills and they would be practically touching one another. You had to manure almost on a double basis for that. I used to manure twice over with the farmyard and we grew tremendously heavy roots under those conditions and the artificials were almost doubled also. Now we dare not make the drills less than 23 or 24 inches in order that we can do more of the work by horse work.

6228. In your Table No. 10 you show exactly the same amount of manure, 20 tons of natural and 5 cwt. of superphosphates and 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia?—Yes, but that is on the other farm—the Stoke Grange Farm. This is on the first farm which is very different land altogether and under very different conditions. I was producing on the first farm the greatest quantity I possibly could for milk production in the winter. It was a very different thing from what I was doing when I went to the new farm on the other system of farming.

6229. Do you not think it strange that the value of the manurial residue in 1914 should be charged at £1 15s. per acre, while manures were costing considerably less, and then in 1919 that according to your figures it is only worth £1 1s. per acre?—It was on the quantity of manure used; that is where the increase comes in—the differences between the quantity of manures that were used then as compared to the quantity used now.

6230. Your figures rather suggest that the quantity of manure was the same in each case?—No, it was double under those conditions. I used to manure twice with the farmyard and on the same basis with the artificials.

6231. In the table with regard to mangolds the quantity of manures is the same?—Yes, on that farm it is so, but on Henhull it was very much higher as it was under a different system.

6232. In regard to the question of some guarantee for the future, have you considered the natural play of the market in the future so far as agriculture is concerned? The open market to-day is very favourable to the farmer, is it not, although I do not say you have the advantage of it?—We have not the open market and we cannot judge as to what the open market would be; we have no means of judging.

6233. The American prices generally determine the price of corn apart from the restrictions, and they would determine the market price, would they not?—Yes, but it would be quite a different thing altogether if the markets in this country were open.

6234. Therefore, a guarantee would not help you at all to-day?—It would help us. For instance, at the present time if you take undecorticated cotton cake I believe that is controlled at £19, whereas if you take the undecorticated cotton cake which is imported you cannot buy it at anything like the money; it is £23 I think.

6235. I want you to consider what the future of the industry is likely to be so far as open-market prices are concerned?—I think if we had got the markets open and we got a great quantity of stuff brought over it would have the natural effect of reducing prices here.

6236. You think prices will be reduced?—I do; perhaps not immediately, but I think they will be reduced in the course of time.

6237. Have you considered the effect of freights on imports?—There is no doubt that freights will effect it considerably, but is there any possible chance of freights being reduced to any extent? As far as I can see, I do not think there is.

6238. Therefore, that will have a tendency to keep up the price of imported corn?—It might so far as the freight was concerned.

6239. Do you think that in the next few years the natural conditions will be such that the farmer will be able to sell his produce apart from any guarantees?—It depends upon how long you mean by "the next few years," because the farmer has to count in terms of years. We cannot lay a basis for our farming just for a year or two; we have to count on for years and have the whole plan of our farming system mapped out for years ahead in the course of our cropping.

6240. Do you think farmers consider that of great importance?—It is a matter of necessity; we have to farm on up-to-date lines.

6241. We have been told here that the farmer has a great objection to taking his land on lease and that he prefers to take it on a yearly tenancy?—I am not able to say much about that, because in our part of the country we are all of us practically compelled to buy our farms or else go out, and there will consequently very soon be neither taking a farm on lease nor on yearly tenancy in our part of the country; they will all be owners in a way.

6242-3. Do you not think that suggests that the farmers have confidence in the future of the industry by virtue of the fact that they are content to purchase their holdings at the increased prices that are being asked, which they do?—No; it is a case of compulsion. You have either to do it or go out, and there are plenty of farmers who have had to buy their farms with borrowed money. I do not know what they will do in the future, but what can they do when they are faced with a sale over their heads? They either have to buy their farms or go out, and if they go out, where are they to get another?

6244. Apparently they have to choose the lesser of the two evils?—A very large number of these farmers have been on their farms all their lives, and their fathers before them for a very long time, and they have a great dislike to being turned out of their farms and even out of the neighbourhood altogether, and, although it is a very risky thing, they have faced the purchasing of their holdings at the increased prices rather than be turned out of them.

6245. Have you kept accounts of your farm?—I have in a rough way.

6246. Have you anything in the nature of balance sheets showing the results from a profit and loss point of view?—I have not any balance sheets that would be sufficiently developed to put before a body of experts.

6247. Would you agree that in the last few years the results of farming have been very good?—I agree that the last few years have been more profitable than before, but that does not say a great deal.

6248. Would you not agree that they have been very good?—They have been good during the last few years. We admit that fact certainly, but we also think that pre-war we did not get the return that we ought to have got on our capital and energy and brains. In fact generally I have held the view that where a man in farming made £1 extra during the war the merchant or the tradesman in the City with equal energy and capital at stake perhaps made £10—and most likely.

6249. *Mr. Robbins*: You speak in your *précis* about the necessity for a guarantee, and then I understood you, in answer to a question put to you by Mr. Walker, spoke of the advisability of fixing prices There is a great difference in the two policies. Which do you favour, the fixing of prices or the giving of a guaranteed minimum allowing the farmer the play of the market?—There is not a great real of difference between them. I hardly know how it would work You mean by the fixing of prices the fixing of a minimum price for whatever we have got to produce?

6250. I was not quite sure what you really mean by a fixed price. I understand you to advocate the fixing of prices?—Yes—the giving of a guaranteed minimum.

6251. That is not quite the same thing, is it, as a guaranteed minimum allowing the farmer above the minimum the play of the market?—Yes—why not?

6252. I want your view. You do not advocate really the fixing of prices definitely, do you?—It seems to me it is almost one and the same thing.

6253. It may be, but it does not follow necessarily. For instance, at the present time you have a guaranteed minimum under the Corn Production Act?—Yes.

6254. A figure very much below the actual market price, and the Government are giving you this year a higher guarantee. You are not likely, I admit, to get very much above this year's guarantee, but

you get something very much more than the guarantee in the Corn Production Act?—Yes, but on last year's prices have we got more than the price fixed for last year?

6255. Yes?—Not that I am aware of; I have not received any yet.

6256. Would you advocate a guaranteed minimum, allowing the farmer the play of the market above the minimum?—Yes.

6257. Do you think a guarantee will be necessary under present conditions and the probable conditions of the next few years if no pressure is brought upon the farmer to crop in certain directions—if he is allowed absolute freedom of cropping?—Yes, if you want to keep the arable land under cultivation.

6258. Supposing the Government allow you to crop the land as you like and do not bring any pressure at all to bear upon you to induce you to crop in one way or another, do you still think that a guarantee is necessary?—Certainly, if you wish to keep the arable land under cultivation; otherwise a large proportion will go down to grass.

6259. You would say to the Government: "If you want to increase the area of tillage or if you want to maintain the present area you must give us a guarantee"?—Yes.

6260. "But if you allow us to do as we like then we do not ask for a guarantee": is that your view?—Unless there is some guarantee for the next few years in regard to cereals a large proportion of the arable land will go down to grass.

6261. So long as the State does not complain about that, would the farmer complain if he did that without any guarantee?—What would be the use of him complaining?

6262. I am not suggesting that it would be of much use, but would he complain if he were allowed to do exactly as he liked?—I cannot answer for farmers generally, but so far as my own point of view is concerned I should not consider that it was of any use.

6263. Your view is that the risks of tillage farming have so much increased that a guarantee is absolutely necessary if the farmer is to maintain the present area of tillage?—Yes.

6264. And you consider that the guarantee ought to be over the present guarantee, which is 75s. 6d.?—Yes—certainly not below.

6265. Otherwise the farmer will not maintain his present area and he will certainly not increase it?—That is so.

6266. With regard to hours, strictly speaking there is no Order of the Board which has affected the right of the farmer to contract with his labour for any number of hours he considers necessary for the proper conduct of his business?—That is so.

6267. As a matter of fact, the Board have altered the number of hours on three occasions in respect of which the minimum rate is paid?—Yes.

6268. I understand from one of your answers that that alteration has brought about an unwillingness on the part of the worker to work longer hours than those hours which are fixed for the minimum wage?—Yes, it has.

6269. You mean if you offer a labourer a sum which is at least equivalent to the minimum rate plus overtime rates for extra hours you cannot get him to work more than the 54 hours in the summer?—Of course a great deal depends upon the men and the masters. In some cases it can be managed all right, but what I specially refer to is the fact that these alterations in hours do create—certainly with a certain section of the men—a great deal of unrest. I think that it is the few that unfortunately cause trouble with the others. If the body of the men generally were left alone to make amicable arrangements with their employers as between master and man it would be very much better.

6270. Strictly speaking there is nothing to prevent master and man making any arrangements they like to make now, but you say the issue of the Board's Order has made it more difficult for those arrangements to be entered into?—Yes. The same conditions do not prevail on every farm; they are different everywhere almost and in some cases where you get a lot of single men, through the isolation of the farm and other things they get dissatisfied; that is where the greatest difficulty comes in.

6271. You say you had no difficulty in getting men to work overtime before the war, but there is a reluctance to do it now?—Yes.

6272. Will you explain that a little?—I think it is because they are getting higher wages in Cheshire and they are quite satisfied with the day rates and are content to go on easily and comfortably instead of exerting themselves more to earn the extra money.

6273. With regard to the lessened output, your view, I understand, is that the increase of output in the industry generally, which was referred to by the Prime Minister, is due very largely to the enormous amount of machinery which has been used during the war period?—Yes, to the machinery and to the exertions of the farmer and his own family.

6274. You think that the output of the individual labourer is undoubtedly less than it was before the war?—I do.

6275. *Mr. Parker*: What capital per acre is necessary in your district for proper farming?—Anything from £25 to £30 per acre at the present time.

6276. Do you think that farmers generally have that amount of capital embarked in their farms?—I think in Cheshire that the farms are just as well capitalised as they are in any county.

6277. You think they are commanding that amount of capital?—Yes, I think there is that amount of capital in the farms. Whether the farmers are providing it themselves is a very difficult matter to find out.

6278. Are your rates increasing very much?—Very much.

6279. You put your rent and rates at £2 10s. 3d. an acre?—Yes.

6280. What proportion of that is rates?—5s. 3d.

6281. Are they going up still more?—My rates are slightly more this year than last.

6282. They are generally getting higher?—Yes, the rates are getting higher as everyone knows; they are going up.

6283. *Mr. Nicholls*: Do the figures dealing with potatoes in your Table No. 1 and Table No. 2 apply to the same farm?—No.

6284. They are for different farms?—Yes, different farms; one is for the light-land farm and the other is in respect of the stronger farm.

6285. Which is the strong one?—The first one.

6286. That is really strong land?—Not absolutely strong. You cannot grow potatoes on absolutely strong land, but it is stronger land than the other; the second one is very light, sandy sub-soil. You have the costs of the growing of wheat on the light land and the costs on the heavier land, and the cost comes out lighter on the heavier land than on the light land because you have to put more into the light land with a less yield.

6287. With regard to the drilling and covering up, how many horses do you work with your apparatus?—Two horses.

6288. And holeing up too?—Yes.

6289. And scuffling?—One for the scuffling.

6290. For doing one row at a time?—Yes.

6291. You always do one row only?—Yes.

6292. Your land is too strong to go beyond that?—Yes.

6293. With regard to the manuring and the carting and spreading at 2s. 6d. a ton, £3 an acre, do you not consider that rather high?—Everything depends upon how far your homestead is from your land.

6294. I quite agree?—It is not too high in this case.

6295. How far would it be from the homestead?—Over two miles.

6296. It is hardly fair to give us the cost in that case, because the cost would be very high where you have to cart a distance of two miles?—That is so.

6297. Do you suggest to the Commission that with regard to this manuring, carting and spreading you cannot get the men now to do it piecework?—No, you cannot get it done piecework in our county now. In 1915 I had over 200 acres done piecework—manured and carted—and some of it a mile and a half to two miles away. We based our piecework rates in that case on an average.

6298. Have you got the same type of man now that you had in, say, 1915, or did your best men go from

you during the war?—I have changed my farm since. I am in another district now, but the same type of men are at the farm I was at then to a large extent.

6299. We have got a comparison of figures here between these two farms which do not, until they are explained, present just the case we want. What I wanted to find out was, if the same type of man was there, why there should be a greater difficulty in getting him to work along the same lines as he did in 1915?—Generally speaking we have not got the same type of man. For instance, during the war I had a lot of good young men leave—I had nine go in one fortnight—some of the best men on the farm, and quite a number of them have never come back; they were killed, and you have not got the same choice of men now.

6300. That means that the war did take away from you men who were eligible before—men of a more capable type?—We have lost some of our best men.

6301. That accounts for some of your difficulties and for the large increase in the cost?—It certainly must account for the whole situation when you get a depletion of some of your best men.

6302. With regard to the question of guarantees, do you think that if farmers were guaranteed a certain price for cereal growing they, on their side would be prepared to guarantee the State a certain acreage of wheat, we will say? If the State wants so much wheat grown, and it says to farmers, "To encourage you to grow wheat we are prepared to do so and so," you, on your side, ought to say to the State, "We are prepared to give you the acreage you want," do you not? Do you think the farmer would agree to that?—Yes, I think he would. He has always done his best in the past to carry out his side of a bargain, I think.

6303. Do you think that he would be prepared to have pressure put upon him to do that?—Do you mean more pressure than he has had during the war? I think he has responded wonderfully well during the war in the ploughing up of his old pasture and all the rest of it—which is a great sacrifice to make.

6304. A good deal of the response was due to the fact, was it not, that he had to do it because of the pressure brought to bear upon him?—In our county I knew a good deal about that. I was on the Committee, and I am still on it, and I know there was very little indeed of that pressure that had to be brought. It was only in the case of a few out-of-date farmers who were not farming as they should have done where any pressure was needed to be put on.

6305. Could you say whether that side of it has been discussed by the farmers at all?—I do not think it has in our district, but I do not think there would be the least difficulty about it.

6306. *Mr. Lennard*: You spoke of a co-operative society as being unable to get men of sufficient ability to act as managers of farms?—Yes.

6307. Is that due, do you think, to the salaries offered being inadequate? It is a common charge against co-operative societies that the salaries they offer are not enough?—I could not say. I do not know what salaries are being paid by the co-operative societies at the present time, but in farming men must have a natural ability which you very often do not get in the ordinary man and they do not get the best men certainly.

6308. You might get them if the position was made more attractive?—I question whether you would even then.

6309. Why?—There is a certain dislike amongst the farming community to take up these positions; they like to farm on their own, and not to be restricted I know that in my own case it would go very much against the grain for me to have to farm under the conditions that these men I know have to farm under and the best men will not have it. You are always subject to a Committee and so on, and a man is not at liberty to farm, as he should be, under the best conditions.

6310. He is an employee instead of an employer?—Yes.

6311. I gathered from your answer to Mr. Walker that in your opinion cereal production is in danger because of farmers having a feeling of insecurity as to the future in respect of selling prices?—Yes.

6312. You said that the farmer had to look a long time ahead. Do you consider that corn production would be more encouraged by a moderate guarantee for a period of years than by a high guarantee for one year?—Unless the guarantee is fairly liberal for a number of years it will not have the desired effect.

6313. Have you considered the guarantee as an insurance against loss rather than as an assurance of gain? We have had it put before us that a guarantee may be regarded as an insurance against a slump of prices in a particular year to safeguard the farmer against very heavy loss?—Yes, and to cover some of the risk that he runs.

6314. Yes?—Of course, we have always the abnormal seasons to contend with, and we must have something allowed for that.

6315. The danger which the guarantee would guard you against is not so much the danger of a bad season in this country but the danger, if one may put it so, of a very good season in America?—Yes.

6316. Do you think that a guarantee of 60s. a quarter for four years would make the farmer feel fairly secure against serious loss by a collapse of prices in a particular year, if he was able at the same time to make full profit in years when prices were high?—A minimum guarantee of 60s. for wheat?

6317. For wheat for four years?—I do not think you would maintain the acreage of wheat under such a guarantee as that.

6318. Not even if the farmer had the free play of the market above that?—No, I do not think so.

6319. Do you think that the farmer would rather have a guarantee of 60s. for four years for wheat, or no guarantee at all?—I do not think there would be much to choose between the two.

6320. You realise, I suppose, that a guarantee which was higher than the normal cost of wheat at world prices in the future would involve a serious burden on the taxpayer?—Yes; if it was higher it would be a burden there is no doubt, but is it not a burden that is justified?

6321. Will you agree with me that the taxpayer is pretty heavily burdened already?—Yes.

6322. I want to make clear a point which was raised just now by Mr. Nicholls. You agreed with him, I think, that if a guarantee were given by the Government the Government in fairness to the community might require something from the farmer in return?—Yes.

6323. Take an example: Do you think farmers would agree that it would be a fair condition of the guarantee that farmers ought to maintain their present area under tillage and plough up any land the County Agricultural Committee considered should be ploughed up? I mean unless a man did this he should not be entitled to receive any payment which he might otherwise receive under the guarantee?—That is, if the market prices for the year fall below the guarantee and he had to make his claim upon the Government and unless he had kept up his acreage he could not substantiate his claim?

6324. Yes, unless he had kept up his acreage and done anything in the way of ploughing up fresh acreage that the County Committee told him to do, he would not be entitled to receive payment?—That would be having regard to what he had ploughed during the last two or three years.

6325. With regard to that you would have to trust the wisdom of the County Committee of course?—Yes. In the majority of cases the plough has been put in to the utmost limit unless you want to endanger the milk supply. We have to have a certain amount of acreage of pasture for cattle in the summer time and for the feeding of the beef cattle too, and if you extend it any further than it is at the present time I think there would be a danger there, but to maintain the present acreage is, of course, another thing.

6326. You agree it would be considered a fair condition in return for the guarantee that the farmer should maintain his present acreage?—Yes, I think so.

6327. Do you not think it might also be made a condition that if it seems good to the County Agricultural Committee that more land should be ploughed up the farmer should consent?—I do not see any objection to that; I think that is quite reasonable.

6328. Your figures for 1915 and 1919 refer to different farms, do they not?—Yes.

6329. I notice that you do not give the yield of the crops, and I suggest to you it would increase the possibility of our using your figures for comparative purposes if you told us the yield per acre on the two farms—not only the yields for the years in respect of which you have given us figures, but the average yield over a period of years, so that we should have some means of gauging the difference in the quality between the soils, and so on. Could you do that for us?—I only had the light-land farm for two years, and I used artificials very heavily on it. It had not been farmed much before. I could not give you the average for any number of years in that case, but the average for the two years would be barely four quarters of wheat.

6330. I am not asking you for figures at the moment, but could you supplement this information which you have very kindly given to us by adding such facts as you have in your possession with regard to the yields?—As far as I possibly can I will do so.

6331. *Mr. Langford*: In answer to Mr. Walker you said it was possible to increase production. I understood that to mean upon the present tilled land: is that so?—Yes. I think that farming generally, although it has increased its production during the last few years there is room for still further improvement. I mean if you get all the land farmed on the top it is possible to produce more than is being produced at present.

6332. Do you not regard the present conditions under which land is held as being somewhat against the farmer putting his best into it? Let me put it in this way: Do you think and expect that under the present conditions of tenure the farmer is likely considerably to increase production upon land which is under the plough at the present time?—No.

6333. You yourself have had the misfortune to have two farms sold over your head?—Not exactly sold. In the case of the Stoke Grange Farm they simply took 300 acres out of the heart of it and made it impossible for me to hold the rest.

6334. Your first farm was bought by the County Council, was it not?—Yes.

6335. For small holdings?—No, not for small holdings; it was bought for a farm institute.

6336. Then you took a farm of 764 acres, and for national reasons you had to give that up also?—Yes.

6337. In answer to Mr. Lennard you said that you had put a great amount of energy and capital into that farm during the two years you had it?—Yes.

6338. I suppose you received some compensation when you left?—Yes, I got what I could get, but you know how the War Office pay.

6339. You got some compensation for your unexhausted manures?—Yes.

6340. Did that compensate you for what you had put in?—No.

6341. Of course we all agree that for national purposes that farm was bound to be taken over?—Yes.

6342. But in any case you were the sufferer?—Yes.

6343. In consequence of the insecurity of your tenure you lost considerably?—That is so.

6344. Do you think that neighbouring farmers, knowing what happened to you in those two particular instances, are likely to farm on a high level if they are going to get inadequate compensation should they also be turned out of their farms?—No, I do not think so. Where we get the best farming now is where the farms belong to the farmers themselves.

6345. You said that a good deal of farms in Cheshire had been sold?—Yes.

6346. Would it be fair to suggest that a good deal more than 50 per cent. of the land in Cheshire has been sold recently?—I should not say recently. It has been going on in Cheshire for a long time, but I do not think 50 per cent. of the land has been sold recently. A large proportion of it has, and it is going on all the time.

6347. Can you give the Commission any idea of what effect, capitalising the amount of money which has been paid for farms at 5 per cent., will have by way of increased rental in the case of the new occupiers compared with the rentals they previously paid?—I could not give you the figures now, but it will certainly mean a big increase in the rent in every case.

6348-9. The cost of production, therefore, in consequence of farmers having been compelled to buy their land, will be considerably increased?—That is so; it is bound to be.

6350. In answer to Mr. Walker you said that a guarantee to do the farmer any service should not be less than the amount of the present guarantee?—Yes.

6351. Had you in your mind the guarantee under the Corn Production Act or the present minimum price?—The present minimum price.

6352. That is 75s. 6d.?—Yes.

6353. You are in favour, if a guarantee is given, of the farmer being expected by the Government to keep a rather large proportion of his land under the plough?—Yes, I think that is quite reasonable.

6354. Would you agree with me that that guarantee to the Government on the part of the farmer would be sufficiently met however the farmer cropped that tillage? It would not necessarily follow that he would have to grow a large quantity of wheat each year?—No, I do not think that he should be tied down in that respect.

6355. He could crop his land as he liked so long as he kept it under the plough?—Yes; you cannot farm to the best advantage if you are tied down.

6356. Would you agree with me that the less wheat a farmer grows the better it would be in any national crisis which arose necessitating an increase in our wheat production—that is to say, land which had not been under wheat would grow much greater crops of wheat than if it had been heavily wheated in the meantime?—Yes, if you heavily wheat your land you are taking a great deal out of it.

6357. You agreed with Mr. Lennard that the taxpayer is heavily burdened at the present time? Yes.

6358. When you said that you included the farmer as a taxpayer, of course?—Yes.

6359. I do not think you quite did justice to yourself, if I may say so, when you answered Mr. Nicholls as to the hauling of the manure at 2s. 6d. per ton. Do you suggest to the Commission that the cost of hauling manure two miles—which means a four miles' journey altogether—would be made by 2s. 6d. a ton?—It would not all have to be carted two miles, perhaps.

6360. No, but he put it to you, and you said two miles?—It would not be met by 2s. 6d. if it were all two miles away.

6361. *Mr. Duncan*: Are they two miles away from the homestead on a 200-acre farm, to which I understand the 1919 figures apply?—Yes, but this one estimate is not only on the actual crop of my own farm at the present time, for the simple reason that last year, through the very abnormally wet season, I was not able to get the acreage of potatoes in that I should have liked, and this estimate is really taken on my own farm together with one of the most up-to-date potato-growing farms.

6362. *Mr. Dallas*: Surely we have been proceeding this morning under the impression that we were dealing with Mr. Goodwin's own farm of 200 acres, and now he changes the whole thing by saying it is not on his farm alone?—Not the whole of it.

6362A. The examination and cross-examination has all been on the assumption that these figures relate to Mr. Goodwin's own farm of 200 acres. Now, in reply to Mr. Duncan's questioning as to the field being two miles away from the homestead, Mr. Goodwin says that the figures do not relate to his own farm alone, but also to another farm.

Chairman: I think we must leave it to Mr. Langford to get that out.

6363. *Mr. Langford*: I put it to you that you would not, in the case of fields a long distance away from the homestead, be able to cart your farmyard manure and spread it for 2s. 6d. a ton?—The 2s. 6d. does not cover the spreading.

6364. You say so here?—No, it says, "Carting 2s. 6d. per ton and spreading £3" per acre.

6365. Even assuming that the 2s. 6d. does not include spreading you would need to be very near the field to cart the manure at 2s. 6d. a ton?—That is so.

6366. It could not possibly be carted anything approximating to a distance of two miles for that price?—No.

6367. You spoke about the danger to the milk supply if more land is broken up. I take it that you refer particularly to your own county, which is a dairy county?—That is so.

6368. That would not be applicable to many other counties?—No.

6369. You speak of the lack of interest on the part of the agricultural labourer in his work at the present time. I am quite certain you want to do full justice to the labourer?—I do.

6370. Pre-war, when wages were very much lower than they are to-day, it was possible for the farmer to expect less from his men than he is bound to expect from them to-day under revised and higher wages?—Yes.

6371. That may account, may it not, for what appears to be an apparent lack of interest on the part of the labourer in his work?—That is so. I am afraid that many farmers do not realise the position from that aspect.

6372. With regard to co-operative farms you said that the bailiffs and managers put in by co-operative societies did not carry on the farming operations so sucessfully as the farmer himself would?—Yes.

6373. I put it to you that is not the fault of the bailiff himself, but very largely the fault of those who are over the bailiff who know nothing of agriculture?—Yes, that is quite right. I referred to him having to work under a Committee and to his not having any freedom at all.

6374. You as a farmer experience no difficulty in finding a suitable bailiff or a foreman to manage your farm, do you?—No.

6375. That is because you understand and are able to be reasonable with him and give him proper oversight?—That is so.

6376. Which he does not get when he is farming under a Committee?—That is so.

6377. *The Chairman*: To what do your figures refer? Do they refer to three farms or to two farms or what?—To my own three farms, with the exception of potatoes. I wanted to base the figures exactly on this year's crop, and through not being able myself to grow the quantity of potatoes that I thought would be a fair crop upon which to base the figures, I consulted with an up-to-date farmer with respect to those figures and included his results.

6378. Are the figures in Table No. 1 in respect of a particular farm or a selection of farms?—In respect of two particular farms.

6379. Not necessarily your own farms?—That is the only one which does not relate to my own farms.

6380. What sort of land is this other farm?—Medium land on the light side. I can give you the name of the farmer if you wish it.

6381. Yes, I should be much obliged if you would give us his name?—Mr. Peter Frith, of Organsdale, Kelsall, Chester.

Mr. Sadler: The farm is under the Crown.

6382. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: I understood you to say in reply to one of the Commissioners, that you were in favour of a guaranteed price provided that it exceeded 60s. Is that so?—I did not say provided that it exceeded 60s. I think I said, not below the present minimum price.

6383. I think 60s. was suggested to you, and you thought it was not of much value. Was not that so?—Yes, I think that was so; but my idea was that the guaranteed price must not be below the price of 75s. 6d. at present fixed for wheat.

6384. Would you agree with the suggestion that the guaranteed price, the hours of labour, as well as the wages to be paid to the labourer, should cover a certain period?—I think it is necessary that the guarantee should be given for a certain period.

6385. For what number of years?—I would suggest not less than five.

6386. I think you said that the frequent changes in the hours of labour were a disturbing element in production?—Yes.

6387. And you agree that the hours should not be interfered with except in every three or five years?—No, not in respect of hours. I thought you referred to the guaranteed minimum for corn.

6388. I refer to the guarantee to cover four or five years; I also refer to the hours as well as the remuneration?—In respect of hours, I think certainly a yearly revision would be quite reasonable.

6389. That they should synchronise, finish and commence at the same time?—Yes. You mean the question of wages and hours in respect to the Wages Board, how often would I suggest a revision?

6390. Yes. I think you suggested that farmers were liable to revert to grass farming if a guarantee were not given?—Yes.

6391. What effect would that have on milk, cheese, and meat?—Certainly there would be more pasturage for the production of milk, but there would not be perhaps the same amount of provision for the winter months.

6392. Would not that set up a keen competition and reduce prices for milk and cheese, if a large number of farmers were to revert to grass farming?—Reduce the prices of milk?

6393. Yes?—We have not quite the same competition in respect of milk, and there never can be.

6394. Would it not be home competition? The farmers would be competing one against the other?—I do not think it would have that effect—not to the same extent.

6395. I notice in your Table No. 1, that you paid £2 10s. 3d. in rent and rates; is not that rather a high rent?—No. In Cheshire the bulk of the farms are let at from £2 and upwards, a great many of them—the best farms.

6396. Have not we got here rent and rates at 28s.?—That is on the other large farm in Shropshire—a very different farm altogether.

6397. Did you tell us that you owned this farm when you paid £2 10s. 3d.?—Yes.

6398. How did you arrive at fixing this rent of £2 10s. 3d.?—Chiefly on the rent that was paid previous to my buying it, with an addition for the increase in capital at the present time.

6399. Did you buy this farm in the open market, or was it a private transaction?—It was a private sale.

6400. Would you mind telling the Commission how many years' purchase it meant?—I have not calculated how many years' purchase it was. I may say that a farm of this character at the present time would make £65 per acre without any difficulty.

6401. That is over 30 years' purchase?—Yes. I may point out that one particular estimate does not refer to my farm.

6402. This £2 10s. 3d.?—No.

6403. Does not it refer to your farm?—No.

6404. Does not it refer to the crop grown in 1919?—Not that one particular estimate. My own farm is on the same basis with respect to rent, so that the question applies equally.

6405. What I wanted to find out was, whether this high rent was paid on account of the high price that you paid for the farm?—Well, the bulk of the farms are let at the present time at £2 an acre upwards.

6406. Would you be surprised to hear that we have had several instances given us here where good land is let at much less than this?—It must be a very old

take, where it has followed on from father to son; and those are being rapidly brought into the market and the rent doubled in value when they have to purchase.

6407. Then taking your Table No. 1 again: Manure 20 tons at 15s. Is not that a high rate for manure?—I do not think so. I know of cases where it has been a great deal more—where farmers have had to pay more for manure.

6408. Is this the market value?—The market value would be rather higher than that at the present time if we had to buy the manure.

6409. What would you be able to do with this manure if you did not apply it to the land; could you sell it in your district?—Yes.

6410. You told a member of the Commission that there was a falling off in the efficiency of the workers in your employ?—Yes.

6411. Do you find the deterioration in the older men or in the younger men?—Not quite to the same extent in the older men.

6412. Do you find any at all in the older men?—I do not think they have realised that the high rate of wages demand higher service.

6413. So that chiefly it is amongst the younger men, is it?—I think it is amongst the older hands; they are not quite the same as the younger men. Of course I think it may pass.

6414. To what do you attribute this falling off; how do you account for this indifference in the younger men?—I think, as I said before, that the war has a great bearing on it; the effects of the war have something to do with it.

6415. Would they be men who have been in the army?—Some of them.

6415A. I think you told us that the increased production was due in the main to the special efforts of the farmers and their families?—And machinery—improved methods of machinery.

6416. Does that mean that the farmers in pre-war times were indifferent?—No, not at all.

6417. You told us, I think, that you could not get men to do piecework?—Not as we used to.

6418. Would the piecework that you usually got prior to war time be as efficiently done as day work?—I should say perhaps not in all cases quite as well done; but taking it on the whole, there is no reason for complaint.

6419. Is not there a tendency as a rule to scamper over piecework and get it done?—You may have that in some cases; but I never had any great difficulty in that way when I was working on piecework, as long as the men could be paid.

6420. It means more supervision, does it not?—Certainly, you do want some supervision; but you want supervision in day work.

6421. So that what you gain by piecework you lose by paying supervision, do not you?—No, I do not think so—not to that extent.

6422. What wages do you pay to the men that you employ at the present time?—My men are receiving at the present time 50s. a week, house and garden rent free, and their milk at 4d. a quart. There are a lot of extras; I do not know whether you wish me to enumerate them.

6423. That is considerably over the minimum, is it not?—It is over the minimum for Cheshire; but there is an arrangement come to, a properly drawn up agreement at the present time between the Workers' Union in Cheshire and the Farmers' Union, whereby 48s. is fixed as the price for 54 hours all the year round for first grade men, and that is being carried out, I think, loyally. I think at the present time there is a deputation of equal numbers of workers of the Cheshire Wages Board and employers, meeting the Central Wages Board with a view to pressing the whole of the question that the men do not wish for any alteration from that; that is for winter and summer.

6424. Do you mind telling the Commission what capital you use on this 200 acre farm?

6425. *The Chairman*: He has answered that?—I said £25 to £30 was about what the capital was on these farms.

6426. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: How would that compare with the capital sunk in the larger farm per acre?—The capital on the larger farm would not be quite as big. Of course, that was at a time when the value was considerably less.

6427. Would the increased capital invested in this farm account for the fact that you are now the owner and not the tenant farmer?—To some extent; but the values have altered altogether; it requires now an increased capital to stock a farm. In stocking a farm to-day it would take that amount of capital, whereas in 1915 it did not take that amount of capital.

6428. Is not it an increased capital from revaluation—what we call "watered" capital?—You must take the capital at what it would cost you to start.

6429. But it does not mean that you actually go to the Bank and raise a certain sum of money?—I should have to do so if I were starting the farm.

6430. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: I gather that you are a believer in keeping up tillage at as high a point as possible?—Yes.

6431. For what reason?—Do you mean am I a believer in keeping up the present acreage of tillage from my own personal standpoint of farming?

6432. Yes?—Personally, I should not keep up the present acreage of tillage, if I considered my own interests.

6433. I understand you advocate the increase of tillage or maintenance of tillage for the national interest?—Yes.

6434. As an insurance against war risk?—Yes, and against the nation again being in the position it has been in the past.

6435. Do you think that the present amount of tillage is quite sufficient for the purpose?—I think it could be made sufficient. At present, of course, there is a lot of land really that is not suitable for tillage. At the same time, there is a large quantity of land, in my opinion, in the better-tillage counties that is in grass—that is, not good grass land—that might be turned into tillage.

6436. Not necessarily under wheat?—Yes.

6437. Are you aware that it is estimated that it would take about 14 million acres to feed this country very, very inefficiently?—Yes.

6438. That is a long way above the present maximum tillage, is it not?—Yes.

6439. So long as the farmer had a free hand and was allowed to till his land according to his own notions, that would secure the national interest, as you describe it?—Yes.

6440. How does that affect your claim for a guarantee? On the face of it a good deal of that land might be much better employed under tillage than in growing wheat?—Yes; but that would be to the advantage of growing wheat in time of necessity.

6441. I quite agree; but the guarantee would have to be paid during time of peace?—Yes.

6442. How would it affect that in your opinion? Do you propose that the farmer should get his guarantee on his acreage tilled and not on the crop produced, or would you confine the guarantee to wheat and oats?—On the crop.

6443. Whatever it was?—Yes.

6444. That is to say, you contemplate an extension of the policy of the Corn Production Act?—Yes.

6445. You would not confine it merely to wheat and oats?—No, not to wheat and oats.

6446. Then you said in reply to Mr. Prosser Jones that at present the standard rate of wages for Cheshire is 48s. for a 54 hours week?—Yes; that is all the year round.

6447. And I think you said in reply to someone else, that more or less the standard wage before the war was 21s. per week?—I was in Shropshire at that time.

6448. What about Cheshire?—In Cheshire, I think, it would be slightly higher.

6449. *Chairman*: You said from 18s. to 22s. before the war?—Yes. I think that would, generally speaking, apply to Cheshire as well.

6450. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: Take it at 22s.?—Yes; that would be for the head man.

6451. And apparently they were in the habit of working overtime quite freely then?—There was not much overtime then, with the exception of harvests.

6452. I was asking you if they eked out their wages by working overtime in those days when their wages were 22s.?—They were more willing to do so.

6453. Naturally they were. I put it to you if you were getting 22s. you would be much more willing to work overtime than when getting 18s.?—Yes.

6454. Might I ask what their wages were for overtime in those days when the standard wage was at 22s.? It was generally lumped together—so much per harvest, and so on.

6455. Would you mind giving us the figures?—In my own case I used to pay from £2 to £3 extra, according to what the harvests were, for the different harvests.

6456. What other pieces of work were taken on the overtime basis; what else was done by way of overtime?—There would be only the Sunday milking. The Sunday milking was included in the weekly wage at that time.

6457. I am in some difficulty here. You say that overtime was confined entirely to the harvest, with the exception of Sunday milking?—Sunday milking was included then in the weekly wage.

6458. In that case overtime did not apply?—No.

6459. What is your complaint against the men not working overtime? Are they refusing to work overtime in harvest now?—They do not like the overtime in the week besides the harvest time, if they can avoid it.

6460. What overtime in the week—working on what?—There is the milking from the Saturday at noon and the Sunday overtime then; and there is a certain amount of overtime practically every night in the week. Your hours of milking for your dairy cows, if you are to keep them up to the highest production, must be kept somewhere within reasonable limits.

6461. I think I see where the confusion between us is. These jobs were done as part of the ordinary day's work before, so it is really the shortening of the hours that you are complaining about?—Yes.

6462. I thought you were referring to overtime which is paid on a different basis. Have the men actually refused to work the overtime?—In some cases we have difficulty in getting the overtime done.

6463. Actual refusal on the part of the men?—Yes. I have no definite case so far as my own personal farm is concerned to put before you at the time. I know there are cases.

6464. Would you yourself attach very much importance to it, seeing that it has not happened in your experience?—Of course to give a definite opinion on that, you want to know the conditions, do not you?

6465. Naturally; but it has not happened in your experience?—Not in my experience.

6466. You have said repeatedly that there is a good deal of unrest among the labourers in your area, but I see that in paragraph (*f*) of your *précis* you say that so far as your district is concerned the men are satisfied on the question of hours?—Yes. May I point out that that agreement that I have referred to has only recently been made; it has allayed the unrest for the moment.

6467. That is to say, the unrest is settling down?—Yes, in our part of the district.

6468. Now with regard to the question of the buying of farms to which you referred, you made the point, I think, quite legitimately, that the cost of production is certainly increased by farmers having to purchase the farms?—Yes.

6469. Judging from what you said just now, that rather enhances the values?—Yes.

6470. On the other hand, you pointed out that there was no question that the occupying owner was much the more efficient tiller of the soil?—Yes.

6471. How do those two factors balance each other? When he is occupying owner, he knows he will not be disturbed in the same way as he may be under the present land tenure and lose as the result of his own energies during a number of years.

6472. My point is this, that the efficiency of this system of occupying ownership must certainly tend to pull down the cost of production obviously?—To pull down the cost of production?

6473. If the occupying owner is a much more efficient person—much more alert to look after his own interest, it is much to his advantage to bring down the cost of production and thus increase his profit?—Yes. But the buying on the present prices increases the cost of production.

6474. What is the effect of the interplay of these two factors? How far does one counterbalance the other? Of course, we should want the experience of a few years to test that. I have not that experience at the present time.

6475. Then with regard to the cost of production of milk to which you referred. You mentioned some Liverpool contract?—Yes.

6476. I suppose you would get that contract on a basis of competition in the market?—It was in this way: The Liverpool Corporation wanted their milk from approved farms—approved dairies, and it was in the face of competition. At the same time it was a very limited number of farms that could come up to their requirements, and in the competition it did not affect so much the price as the conditions under which it was produced.

6477. Still, the fact that the competition was limited would certainly lead to the contract being put through at a better rate?—It was cut fine.

6478. Confined competition would put up the price slightly?—Yes.

6479. At any rate, the point is this: the price was fixed by open competition, and yet you allege that that price was unremunerative?—No; I do not think I said that. I carried this work on for eight years, but then I came to the point when my farm was sold and there was no need to keep up that fertility for the following year that I had to remain in that farm, and that autumn I was faced with a position of this sort, that I had a large number of cows just on profit and coming in that I could put on the market, and I calculated on the basis of what their production would be, the cost of the food to feed them with and all the incidental costs, and I came to the conclusion that when the need for keeping up the fertility was gone it would not pay me to keep them.

6480. Just for that year?—Yes; of course, I was not dairying on the arable farm; and certainly I should not be prepared again to go in for the heavy work that I had with the winter and summer milk production. I produce milk on a fairly large scale now, but it is not so much winter milk production. It is a great deal of work very often for a very little result.

6481. I quite agree, but my point is that here is a case where you have only the home producer to force, and competition has that effect?—Yes.

6482. Somebody referred to Mr. Lloyd George's statement about the maintained productiveness of farming during the war. You pointed out that in dairy farming you thought it was due to the farmer's sons and daughters?—Yes, and to an increase of machinery.

6483. Do you apply that to arable farming as well?—Of course, the machinery would play a larger part on the arable farm.

6484. There were considerable difficulties with regard to machinery during the war, were there not?—A good deal more than ever before.

6485. What do you consider a fair return on your capital in your first paragraph here—what rate per cent?—Not less than 10 per cent.

6486. Would that be absolutely clear profit, or have you to take all your incidental expenses out of that? Is that to be your gross return on capital or your net return?—I am afraid we shall not see the day when we get the net return.

6487. You mean the 10 per cent. is the gross return?—Yes.

6488. *Mr. Green*: You have not a balance sheet to present us with, have you?—No.

6489. Could you give us any idea of the comparative figures between your profit per acre before the

war and your profit per acre now?—I am afraid I could not. I have not the books here that would give me that.

6490. When you were disturbed from the 300 acres on one of your farms by the building of an aerodrome, did you put in any statement to the War Office as to the profits you were losing on those 300 acres?—To some extent. The War Office paid compensation as an act of grace.

6491. Do you mind telling us what you stated were your profits on those 300 acres?—We did not take the profits on the whole of the 300 acres. You have to prove direct loss, and the War Office pay, I think it is, a year's rent, and so much depends upon the time at which the land is taken off you and when you are allowed to cease cultivating. We did not get any claim on that basis.

6492. You did not put in any statement as to your loss of income?—Loss of profits on certain land we did.

6493. Do you mind telling us what that averaged out at per acre?—I could not tell you without the papers.

6494. You could not give us those figures?—Not from memory.

6495. Are you not rather nervous about the importation of foreign corn—unduly nervous, I mean, as to low prices?

Chairman: I think he answered that question by saying that he feared the reduction in prices of foreign corn would interfere with the prices at which he was able to grow corn in this country.

6496. *Mr. Green*: Yes. I wish to assure Mr. Goodwin that freights have risen from America more than four times. We got these figures just recently, and the costs of production are apparently very much heavier in America than they are here. I only put that for your satisfaction, perhaps. You have a good many grass farms in Cheshire, have you not?—Yes.

6497. What is the average size of these small grass farms?—I do not think I could give you the average size. A very large proportion of the farms in Cheshire are small farms under 50 acres. I could give them to you in a moment or two.

6498. I will ask you another question then. The personal element comes in in keeping a few cows much more than on an arable farm. That is your point about a family working on a small farm?—Yes. These figures will show you directly the almost amazing position in that respect in Cheshire.

6499. With regard to efficiency of the men, do not you think the efficiency largely depends upon the efficiency of the farmer; I mean, for instance, take the neighbouring county of Leicestershire. The Board's Reporters have recently reported to us that the Leicestershire agricultural labourers complain of the inefficient machinery and lack of organisation on many farms as tending to affect adversely the output per man and efficiency. Would you say that that was true of Cheshire?—Not to the same extent, I think, but it has the same effect. For instance, if I could have the training of the older men from their youth, I think I should benefit thereby.

6500. These small farms could be made more remunerative, do not you think, by better transport and more co-operation?—Yes.

6501. I want to ask you if you do not think a system of continuous cropping might not be very economically applied to the Cheshire farms for milk production?—If your land is suitable, possibly it may. We are now just starting experimental work in that way under the County Council, but the difficulty is that the large proportion of Cheshire land is too strong for the purpose, and certainly the labour is very heavy under that system.

6502. Do you believe in a system of keeping land under the plough quite irrespective of whether the crop grown is corn or any other crop?—I believe in freedom of cropping.

6503. I was wondering whether you had ever entertained the idea, instead of guaranteed price in order to keep more land under the plough, a system of abatement under the Income Tax of more land brought under the plough?—That no doubt would have an effect upon it. I have not considered that point.

6504. With regard to wages, I see that this Board's Report states the wages in Cheshire in 1917 at 30s. to 33s. for the ordinary labourer, and only 30s. for the stockman, horseman, and shepherd. Can you account for that?—I cannot; I think there must be some mistake.

6505. Do you think those figures are wrong?—Undoubtedly. The stockman and horseman always get more.

6506. *Mr. Edwards*: You made a statement to the effect that farmers have to look a long time ahead, with which, of course, we all agree. Do you think that the yearly tenancy which has prevailed in Cheshire and most parts of the country gives the farmer a real scope for the development of the land?—Not under present conditions.

6507. You have also said that a large number of Cheshire farmers are being compelled to buy their own holdings?—Yes.

6508. Would you venture to give an opinion as to how many of these farmers are able to pay for their farms without borrowing?—I am afraid there are very few. I mean I have no authority for speaking on that question, but at the same time my opinion is that there are very few.

6509. What percentage do you think?—I do not know. It is a very difficult matter to answer.

6510. In view of the fact that few of the farmers are able to pay for the farms, what effect do you think that is likely to have on the development of farming in Cheshire in future?—We do not know to what extent that applies; it is a very difficult matter to give an opinion upon, because I am not in a position of knowing, generally speaking, what is the farmer's position financially. I know one thing: that no man strives and works harder than the Cheshire farmer; but as to what effect it will have on the position in the future I am not very well able to say, not knowing how the position stands at the present time.

6511. Now you admit, I suppose, that a Cheshire farmer at any time has not too much capital to handle his farm?—I think the Cheshire farmer has had quite as much capital of his own at his disposal per acre as any other county farmer, and probably more.

6512. But the fact that he has to find capital to pay for his land does not improve his position as far as farming is concerned?—It increases his difficulties in respect to what we may term as the same thing as rent; it puts up his rent—doubles it in many cases. Of course, everything depends upon how he is able to buy his land. In some cases at auction he gets run up by other people. If he is able to buy his farm privately from the landowner, he may have a better chance.

6513. Do you think that some system of enabling the farmer to obtain money for the purchase of his holding in view of the present state of affairs would help matters?—I have no doubt it would help matters very materially in many cases.

6514. *Mr. Duncan*: Just on that point of buying the farms, are there many of the farms being put up to auction?—Yes, many of them are being put up to auction, but in some cases, of course, the owner gives the farmer the first chance of buying it.

6515. And who are those who are bidding usually for the farms?—Of course there are quite a number of competitors. You get the County Council for one; for small holdings; then you get the C.W.S. in some cases, where they are closely linked up to their branches; and you get the farmer himself. In some cases you get farmers who have been thrown out, who want the farm, and men who want pleasure farms; we get quite a number of those.

6516. I should have thought from what you have said that Cheshire was not a place for pleasure farming if it is such hard work?—You get the business man who comes down; he does not work hard; he comes for pleasure farming. You do get competition from that quarter.

6517. But the farmers are offering these higher prices for farms even outside their own farms. Are there farmers in the market wanting to get farms?—If a farmer is thrown out of his farm and has to go somewhere, he is naturally on the look-out for the best bargain he can make. He has got to make a living or try to do so under some circumstances.

6518. And they are buying the land to farm it?—What else?

6519. You say that in quite a number of cases they have got to get money on loan before they can buy the farm?—I am not in a position to state that they have to get money on loan, but I should judge so.

6520. So that besides the actual farmers who are engaged in farming, those who have got money to lend are prepared to lend it on the prospects of farming even at enhanced rents?—I take it that anyone who lends money wants security other than the prospects of agriculture; they want other security than that.

6521. What other security do they have?—The man must be able to offer some security in some way, and there are various ways of doing it.

6522. If a farmer wanted to buy a farm and wanted to raise part of the purchase price which he is not able to find himself, he goes into the money market, and naturally the security he has to offer is the industry he is going into?—Yes; he has to take up a mortgage and gives securities.

6523. He takes a mortgage on the farm?—Yes, in various ways. He has to hand over his policies and that sort of thing.

6524. So that tested in the ordinary market way, people generally, farmers and others, think that farming is a sufficiently safe investment even at the enhanced rents of Cheshire?—I think that the money lent is on security already in hand; it must be of course.

6525. And quite independent of farming—quite independent of the subject on which the mortgage is taken?—To a large extent.

6526. Is that the usual way business is done in Cheshire when mortgages are got?—I am not able to answer that question from an outside commercial point of view.

6527. You made the statement that a good deal of increased productivity in farming was due to the increase in machinery. In what particular direction have we had an increase in machinery during the war?—We have had improved methods, and improved machinery to some extent; Government tractors and every kind of implement that has been made have been brought into play to help the farmer in the increased acreage of arable land as evinced by the large amount of that kind of machinery that is now being put on the market.

6528. Apart from the tractors, what was your experience in Cheshire in securing either implements or replacement of machinery during the war?—Do you mean buying new machinery?

6529. Yes; was it difficult or easy?—It was difficult to get at times, certainly.

6530. Is there an actual increase in the amount of machinery being used on the farm apart from tractors during the war period?—Yes.

6531. Will you specify the type of machinery that led to increase of cultivation during the war?—I cannot just give you the particulars at the present time, but all kinds of machinery that have helped in getting work through have been brought into play.

6532. But has there been an increase of that machinery during the period of the war?—Yes; people in some cases had no machinery at all, and they have got machinery. In other cases where they have had out-of-date machinery altogether, and have not been able to cope with the work, then they have taken measures to secure more efficient machinery.

6533. And it has been possible to secure machinery?—Yes. There are always difficulties more or less; they are worse at some times than at others.

6534. We have had an increase of productivity during the war at a time when it was difficult to get machinery. Do you think it likely that we can increase the amount of machinery being used and so increase the productivity?—I have no doubt that as time goes on there will be a gradual increase and improvement of machinery used in agriculture.

6535. Have you considered what the effect will be of the increased rate of wages in increasing the amount of machinery used on the farms?—Not the percentage effect. Certainly they will use every means to bring all machinery into play that is of any value.

6536. If I put it to you that there has been a certain difficulty in getting improved machinery on the farms previously, would that be due to the fact that labour was so cheap in the past that there was not the same pressure on farmers to get labour-saving machinery?—On the most up-to-date farms, you see, that machinery has generally been in use for a great number of years. Then you always get a certain amount of land and farms that have not been up-to-date, and they have been brought more up to the line.

6537. What would be the proportion of up-to-date farms?—I could not give you the proportion. It is very patent to the eye as you go about where the up-to-date-farms are and where they are not.

6538. Are one-half of the farms up-to-date?—Yes, I should say so. I could not give you the proportion.

6539. Then with regard to the efficiency of labour, is this a new difficulty that you are faced with in Cheshire, that the labour is not so efficient as it was? Is this the first time that complaints have become general in the county?—It is more marked than ever before.

6540. Can you ever remember a time when the same was not said as to the efficiency of labour?—Yes. I never heard so many complaints in my experience previously; of course, it is not a long one.

6541. I do not know whether you have ever read reports of previous Commissions dealing with agriculture at any time during the last century, but I have never seen a report in which the same complaint was not made. Is it not a complaint that has always been made by the older men that the younger generation coming up is not so good as the previous generation was?—That may have been so in the good old days. We have not all lived in the good old days. It would not be a report of a Commission if there were not some complaint of some character.

6542. Is it more than that in the meantime in Cheshire?—At the present time I think it is.

6543. I put it to you that the period during which you have had experience of high wages in Cheshire has been a very short one, according to your statement, just during the last year, you have been paying these rates?—Yes, but not compared with other counties.

6544. I am not making a personal attack, but the increase of wages has been very recent?—That applies, generally speaking, not simply to Cheshire.

6545. Do you think you have had sufficient experience of the increased rate of wages to be able to say that the higher the rate the lower the efficiency of the worker?—We do not object to the higher rate of wages. What we want is something like reasonable hours and the work done.

6546. Pardon me; but that is hardly an answer to the question I put to you. The general trend of your answers has been that the inefficiency of the younger workers is due to the fact that they are now getting higher rates of wages, and I think you put it in so many words by saying that they do not realise that the higher the rate of wages the higher the service. My question is, have you had sufficient experience of these higher rates to be able to generalise in that way as to the effect of higher wages?—Our opinion can only be formed from the experience we have had.

6547. If I put it to you that such investigations as we have made as to costs do not show that in those districts which have been higher paid the cost of production—the labour part of the cost of production is no greater than in the lower paid districts; does not that rather show that high wages do tend to efficiency?—They should do certainly; but I am afraid that has not had full play yet in our district. It has not had its effect.

6548. Then in the last paragraph of your *précis* you deal with the question of co-operation amongst the farmers, and you look forward to a time when the farmers will be able to handle and put on the market all their own produce and so bring the consumer and producer closer together. What would be the effect from the point of view of the general public if co-operation is carried to this point, that the farmers are able to control the marketing of their own produce?—I think it will have this effect, that there may be more regularity in the prices. It will do away with some of the slumps that we sometimes get and the waste, and it should help in eliminating so many of the middle profits and have the effect of food being brought to the consumer at a less price than what it would be under ordinary conditions.

6549. And you think the community would be quite safe to leave to the farmers the fixing of prices, and that they will run no risk in a market from which competition has been eliminated?—I am afraid that is a very, very long way off. I see no possibility of our getting that control to bring about that state of things.

6550. You are putting it that they will be able to market all their own produce?—That means that there will be a great saving at certain times of the year. As you know under our system of agriculture we do get certain periods of the year when there is a big lot of produce put on the market, and often great waste, and you may get prices down temporarily; but I think it would regulate prices to some extent—the fact that it will be dealt with in a better way.

6551. And you think the community would be quite safe to trust to the farmers fixing a price when they control the market?—I do not think they have suffered from the present position.

6552. Would the farmers be prepared to allow either the consumers or their workmen any share in the control of such a scheme of marketing their produce?—I do not anticipate that we shall ever get control to that extent.

6553. So that you are now not looking forward to what you say in your *précis*?—I am looking forward to it, but I think the time is a long way off before we shall be able to get that control.

6554. So that we cannot look to much improvement in agriculture from that?—Certainly it will bring about a great improvement in the way I suggest: the regulation of prices instead of the waste that you get at the present time.

6555. *Mr. Dallas*: I do not want to ask you very many questions, because you have answered a great deal and very well, too. I just want to come to this efficiency of labour question. I am not sure whether you grasped the point made by Mr. Langford or whether I grasped it myself, but he mentioned that in days gone by, with a plentiful supply of labour, the farmer was not very particular about the efficiency of his labour, but now, with high wages and a scarcity of labour, he has got to be a great deal more careful, and therefore he sees defects which may have existed in days gone by, but which he did not trouble about. Do not you think there is a lot in that?—There is no doubt a lot in it.

6556. Therefore the inefficiency of labour is more apparent than actually real?—I think it will pass; I think it is passing.

6557. I suppose you know, like the rest of us, that in other industries as well as agriculture, we are faced with this fact, that working people are not going to work the long hours they worked in days gone by?—Quite so.

6558. And that employers in agriculture must face that position?—Yes.

6559. With regard to this discontent in Cheshire you do not think it is due to one side alone?—Talking about labour unrest and discontent, you do not think that it is due to the labourers alone; for instance, they have not all the vices and the employers all the virtues?—No, certainly not.

6560. You are aware that an agreement was arrived at recently on a Saturday and was broken by a large number of the employers on the Monday?—Do you refer to the agreement that I have mentioned?

6561. I think so; between the Cheshire Farmers' Union and the Workers' Union?—Not that I am aware of. I was not aware that it had been broken at all. I thought that all the farmers were carrying it out loyally.

6562. That is not the fact that is placed in front of me or in front of Sir Henry Rew as representing the Board of Agriculture?—I am very much surprised to hear that, because I thought it was working most satisfactorily at the present time.

6563. Probably, yes. Mr. Sadler and Mr. Jones and a number of the best farmers brought the others into line, but that led to a lot of discontent. What I want to suggest to you is this, that unless there is good faith on both sides——?—Quite so. We should certainly not uphold that sort of thing, and I was not aware that that had taken place. As far as we have any knowledge, it is loyally carried out.

6564. It is now?—Yes; in fact, we have recommended it to be loyally carried out all the time since the agreement was made.

6565. I am sure of that. Now just one other point. You know that this year the farmers have been laying a lot of land down to grass?—Yes, there is quite a lot of land that has been laid down, but I may say that there is ever so much accounted for by the fact that a lot of land that should have gone down to the ordinary course to seeds has been kept up, and we have suffered as result in our clover, hay, and fodder. The same rotation has not been followed up to the same extent, and now farmers have returned more to their normal system of farming on whatever course system it is.

6566. You think that would account for the majority of it this year?—I think it would account for a very large percentage. Of course, you will always get cases where men will immediately lay down some of their land to grass; in other cases you have farms that are really over-ploughed.

6567. I was aware of how it was: that in spite of the fact on the one hand the farmers have a definite guarantee for this year's and next year's crop, and also that there is a world's shortage of food production, why it was they were letting this land go down to grass?—You mean land that has been laid permanently down to grass?

6568. Yes?—I think that would apply in some of the districts where they have been chiefly grass and where they are isolated, and as a result they are more heavily hit, because they have had a great assistance during the period of the war from the Executive Committees in carrying out their ploughing programme.

6569. A final word about the guarantee. Do you think it would be right for the manufacturers who manufacture ploughs and drills and harrows and all your machinery that they should have a guaranteed price and be subsidised by the State?—For their machinery?

6570. Yes?—Is there any need for that?

6571. That is a matter of opinion, of course. I am not here to answer questions. I am here to ask them. Some of these manufacturers, and especially manufacturers in this country who are now manufacturing tractors are subject, as you know, to very severe foreign competition?—Yes.

6572. Do not you think they would be entitled to get some protection from the State?—Really, I do not quite know how I should answer that question, if I had a little more time to think about it.

6573. I only suggest to you that for all the things you buy as an employer, as a farmer, you do not want to buy them in a protected market; you want to buy them in an open free market as cheaply as you possibly can. Is not that so?—We naturally all want to buy in the cheapest market we can.

6574. But for the products that you sell you want to get the best price and you want to get the market protected in your interest?—We want a price to live at, whatever way it comes.

Mr. Dallas: Nobody on this Commission would ever object to that.

6575. *Mr. Cautley*: Do you come here as a representative of any public bodies in Cheshire, or only

on your own account, as it were?—As a representative of the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture.

6576. You are deputed by them to come here?—Yes.

6577. Any other agricultural body?—The Milk Producers. I am a member of all the agricultural bodies and the County Committee.

6578. But are the figures that you have put before this Committee approved by the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture?—They have not been submitted to the Chamber of Agriculture.

6579. Or to any of the other bodies?—No.

6580. They are your own figures?—Yes.

6581. Is your farm a similar farm to the bulk of farms in Cheshire?—It is similar to a great many of them, but there is a large proportion of the Cheshire farms that are milk selling farms all the year round. Mine is not a milk selling farm all the year round.

6582. I was alluding rather to the land? Mine is a little on the strong side.

6583. But you can plough it with two horses?—Yes, under certain conditions. I mean if the weather conditions are favourable.

6584. But otherwise you use three?—Otherwise we should have to use more.

6585. I have only one question to ask you about the figures you put before us. I notice you only put down a price of £1 10s. 0d. an acre for ploughing?—Yes.

6586. Is that for two-horse ploughing or three-horse ploughing?—You see we cannot base it on the one, because we do not know what the conditions are that we are going to plough under. In some cases we want more and in some cases we do not; but even with two horses I should put that down.

6587. So should I. I do not think you could do it at less. Would you tell me what the Agricultural Committee of Cheshire charges for tractor ploughing to-day, not last year?—I take it this is the rate which I do not think has been revised for this year.

6588. Then that is last year's?—This will be last year's; from 22s. 6d. to 27s. 6d.

6589. An acre?—Yes, that is down here. But even then they lost thousands of pounds.

6590. They did lose thousands of pounds?—Yes.

6591. In my county it was 32s. 6d., and then they did not cut at all, and it had to be finished off?—There was a great deal of finishing it off here.

6592. However, if you tell me they lost thousands of pounds it is no use to me. You put down £1 10s. for two horses?—Yes; in some cases you have to use more, but, generally speaking, it is two.

6593. Have you allowed for the depreciation of the horses?—No.

6594. Then will you tell me if you give £100 for a horse to-day do you expect him to be worth £100 five years hence?—No, I do not. There is that fact to be taken into consideration.

6595. You have left that out?—Yes. Of course, personally, as far as possible, I always work with young horses, which appreciate in value as a rule.

6596. It seems to be a very low figure, or I think it is?—Yes.

6597. The land you have told me is a little on the strong side?—Yes.

6598. Do you use it partly as a dairy farm?—Yes. I milk 70 cattle on it.

6599. And you sell the milk wholesale, I suppose?—No. I make it into cheese.

6600. Cheese all the year round? You cannot make cheese in the winter, surely?—We can make cheese all the year round.

6601. I know it is possible; but is it possible practically?—Sometimes in the winter we do with what milk we have, but we do not go in specially for winter milk.

6602. But are you now making cheese in the winter?—No, last winter we did not.

6603. You sold your milk?—We sold our milk.

6604. And this next winter?—I can hardly tell you what we will do; so much depends.

6605. I am not so much concerned with yours, but I am taking it as a typical Cheshire mixed farm. Do the farmers in Cheshire make cheese in the winter?—Some few of them, but I think the majority of them would sell their milk in the winter.

6606. And make cheese in the summer?—Yes, I think so. Of course, there has been a great deal less cheese making on the farms during the war.

6607. Of course; but the rest of the farm produce, the cereals which you grow, you sell in the ordinary course?—Yes.

6608. You do not grow the cereals for the purpose of your milk farm?—Of course, we naturally use some.

6609. You use your roots?—Yes, and some oats.

6610. Is it, roughly, a typical Cheshire farm?—Yes, except that we have not the same percentage of suitable land for the plough as some farms have. It is land as to which so much depends on the seasons. For instance, in the spring, with a wet spring and drying up so quickly, we were at a great disadvantage.

6611. I notice you have not given us the yields, but I understand that you are going to do?—Yes, as far as possible.

6612. Is four quarters of wheat the average for the County of Cheshire?—I do not know what the average is according to the official returns; but I should say it would be a little over that. A lot of the Cheshire land will grow wheat.

6613. Could you tell me at all what proportion of the cost of growing wheat goes in labour?—Do you mean the percentage?

6614. Yes?—I cannot without going into it.

6615. You have never considered that?—No, I have not.

6616. Do you have varied kinds of land in Cheshire? Do you have really very heavy and very strong land?—Yes, very strong land.

6617. Three and four-horse land?—I would not say four-horse land, but three-horse land.

6618. Is that used for corn growing now?—In some cases. Of course, a lot of that land has only come under the plough during the war.

6619. As I understand, you ask for a guarantee of about 75s.?—Yes, not less than that.

6620. You would like more?—Yes.

6621. The trouble that I have is, assuming such a thing were possible, that that would benefit the better lands much more than it would the poor lands?—Just so. That is proved by the fact of the increased cost of growing wheat on the light land I had, because we had to put more manure into it.

6622. Can you suggest any way by which that guarantee might be differentiated at all in favour of the worst land?—I have not any suggestion to offer at the moment.

6623. Put on a sliding scale in any way?—I think it is quite reasonable.

6624. Has it ever been considered by your Chamber of Agriculture?—I am afraid not.

6625. I do not suppose you ever realised that this was the sort of question which was important?—No. I may say I was amazed when I came to find out the cost was so much higher on the light land with the worst yield.

6626. This is a question which does not only apply to Cheshire, but applies all over?—Yes, I was amazed to find it was so.

6627. Would it be possible for you to get out at all the portion of the labour costs of growing an acre of wheat?—Yes, I think so. I will do my best to do so.

6628. *Chairman*: As Mr. Cautley has asked you, and I am sure it will be of interest to the Commission, will you be kind enough to do so, and send it to the Secretaries?—Yes. Do you want it both for heavy and light land?

6629. *Mr. Cautley*: Yes. I understand you are not prepared to suggest, and you have not really, or your Chamber of Agriculture has not, considered as to whether it would be possible to have a different rate of guarantee, as it were, for the poor land as compared with the good land?—No, we have not considered that, and that will be proved to you by the fact that I had no knowledge of coming here until about eight days ago, and I have had very little time for anything of the sort.

6630. We are going to have the Board of Agriculture re-organised, I understand, and County Committees are going to take a more prominent part

in agriculture. Would it be possible to make any differentiation as between two-horse land and three-horse land as a practical proposition?—I think so.

6631. Do not answer hurriedly?—Of course, it is a point that would have to be considered.

6632. Coming to your milk production, can you tell me at all what the increase in the price has been that you are receiving for milk as compared with what it was in pre-war times?—I have not the figures by me. I have not my books when I was producing milk winter and summer. Mr. Sadler will be able to give them to you, and Mr. Clarkson will be able to deal with that subject more fully than I can, because I am not practically doing it.

6633. Do you in Cheshire buy many feeding stuffs?—Yes, we buy rather heavily.

6634. I take it that the difference in the cost of feeding stuffs now and pre-war is very, very high?—Very high.

6635. Have you figures to give me?—I have not Mr. Clarkson will give them to you; but I know that within the last few weeks they have risen pounds a ton.

6636. Linseed cake is £25 a ton?—Yes, and then by the time you get it,——

6637. There is a great deal more on it by the time you get it?—Yes. All through the war in the fixing of these prices for our feeding stuffs, there has been so much allowed by the Government for the millers, or whoever deals with it in the interval, to charge for sacks.

6638. That is right. I will ask Mr. Clarkson about that?—As a matter of fact it is equal to so much a sack on your stuff, because when you come to return your sacks now we get about 4d. a-piece for them, whereas we have been paying 9d., 1s., and 1s. 3d. a-piece.

6639. The extra that you have to pay on the sacks and the loss you make on the sacks, and the extras you have to pay for getting the feeding stuffs from the warehouse to the farm, make a very considerable difference?—Yes, a very considerable difference per ton. It might just as well be placed on the stuff, and then we should know what we are doing.

6640. Will Mr. Clarkson also have the difference in the cost of artificial manures?—No, he has not that.

6641. Have you got it?—I have only what is stated here. You notice the difference here. Superphosphates now are 6s. per cwt. We used to buy them at 2s. 6d. pre-war. Then sulphate of ammonia is now £1 per cwt.

6642. Take nitrate of soda?—We do not use that as much. It is going out of favour a great deal.

6643. However, you have not the exact figures?—No, but we could give them to you. Anything you require I will do my best to furnish you with, and all particulars of that character.

6644. I think you have answered this, but I am not clear about it. The average wage before the war was about £1?—Yes, 18s. to 22s.

6645. For how many hours?—The hours worked generally then were 66, I think. In some cases in dairying it was half past 5 to 6.

6646. I do not want the dairying particularly, but I want the average. What was a day's work in Cheshire before the war—what was the ordinary week's work?—Generally speaking, I think it would be 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. It may have applied in some parts, but my own experience pre-war was that my own men worked from half-past 5 to 6 and had 1½ hours for meals.

6647. Sixty-six hours a week, we will say, for £1?—Yes.

6648. What is it to-day?—48s. for 54 hours; 1s. an hour overtime in the week ,and 1s 3d. an hour on Sunday and harvest.

6649. You would have to add that 1s. an hour for 12 hours to make up the total hours?—Yes.

6650. That would bring it to 60s. as against 20s., or just 200 per cent. increase?—Yes. Then there is 1s. 3d. for the Sunday overtime.

6651. The Sunday overtime was not paid for before, was it?—No.

6652. Has your Chamber considered at all as to whether a guaranteed price for English cheese would make the milk production more stable?—I do not think we have considered that point as a Chamber.

6653. It has never occurred to you?—We have not had a discussion on it.

6654. Have you heard the suggestion made?—No, I have not.

6655. If there was a guaranteed price for the cheese in the summer, would that facilitate and make easier the production of milk?—It would prevent the flooding of the market with milk at certain periods of the year, in the summer time chiefly.

6656. That is obvious; but I do not want your off-hand opinion just now, unless you have really considered it?—We have not considered it. That would be a point that would be considered more by the milk producers than by the Chamber, I think.

6657. Has the working of the fixed prices, as carried out by the Food Controller, been satisfactory to the milk producers in Cheshire?—I think, perhaps, Mr. Sadler would answer that question better than I.

6657a. *Mr. Ashby*: I understood you to say a few moments ago that you thought a guarantee for cereals should be given for at least five years?—Yes.

6658. On the ground that farmers had to set out their system of farming for at least that number of years? Do you think as a financial policy it would be wise on the part of any large number of farmers to set out a policy of cultivation on a five years' legislative guarantee for which there is absolutely no further guarantee? For instance, the Government may change, or the opinion of the public may change in the meantime. Do you think that is sufficient?—It would certainly help very considerably. You see, you want the present acreage maintained, and it would help in maintaining that acreage very considerably if we had that guarantee.

6659. But I am not considering for the moment the national interests; I am considering the farmers' interests?—Do not the two go together.

6660. Do they? Are you quite sure about that?—They have some effect on one another.

6661. Are you quite sure it would pay the farmers of Cheshire to increase their cereal acreage and cut out some of their dairy stock?—You have to take the system of farming that the land is suitable for, and which we have carried out in the past.

6662. Your land is more suitable, perhaps, than any other land in this country for dairying purposes?—Yes, for mixed farming.

6663. But the chief product is milk or cheese?—Yes, but there are fairly large arable farms.

6664. Supposing that at any given time the market is more or less against cereal farming, and you were able to carry it on because of a legal guarantee which through some change in public opinion or some change in Government may be withdrawn very shortly, or with three months' notice, or with no notice whatever at the end of the stated period, would not the final position of the farmer under those circumstances be worse than his first position?—It would certainly be bad.

6665. I wish you would turn to some of your estimates for a moment. In Table No. 1 there are oats, double ploughing, autumn, 30s. an acre. That was last year. Could you give me any idea how much could be ploughed in a day?—Not an acre. It would be half an acre, or a little over perhaps, under the present hours.

6666. How many horses?—Two horses.

6667. And one man?—Yes.

6668. You do not know, perhaps, what charge per day per horse is in that figure?—I have not taken it in that way. I have taken it on the cost that the ploughing was taking into consideration the man's wages and the horse, allowing nothing, as was mentioned by the previous Commissioner, for the depreciation of horse and implements.

6669. But how do you know you have not allowed anything for depreciation if you do not know how much you have charged per horse?—The man's wages would be 8s. to start with.

6670. *Mr. Cautley*: If he only does half an acre it would be 16s.?—Yes, it would be 16s. to the acre to start with, and then it does not leave you a great deal for the horse.

6671. *Mr. Ashby*: But you have not really calculated what was the cost of the horse?—I think it is a very low estimate of 30s. per acre.

6672. But you did not do it carefully in any case, whether it is low or high?—Not taking them separately.

6673. Take the next item, harrowing twice. How many acres a day would you do on that?—Everything depends on the harrowing and the condition of it. You can get heavy harrowing and light harrowing. It is so difficult to anyone who understands the position.

6674. It is also difficult under those circumstances to state the cost. If you do not know the amount of work done, how can you state the cost?—We know the amount that we expect to be done. We expect a certain amount of work, knowing the conditions of the work.

6675. That is what I am asking for—the amount you would expect to be done. How much harrowing per day would you expect to get done?—Taking it on the average we might get 6 or 8 acres.

6676. Shall we say 7 acres, which is 26s. 3d. a day?—It would be 3s. 9d. per acre, not 7s. 6d., so that would be 26s.

6677. 26s. for two horses and a man?—Yes.

6678. Yet up above you only charge for ploughing 15s. for two horses and a man?—No. As I said he would plough over half an acre, but so much depends upon your ploughman. Some ploughmen will do very much more than others.

6679. Then will you look at manure, 20 tons at 15s. Is that the value of the dung, or does that include the value of the straw?—That is the value of the dung as it is.

6680. Have you compared that on any comparative basis with the market price?—It is quite a low estimate of the market value.

6681. You can sell it at that price?—You can sell it at more; plenty of farmers have paid 20s. a ton for manure this last season for their potatoes.

6682. I notice you have £2 for dung spreading and £2 for artificials. How much credit do you leave for unexhausted value after you have finished with the potatoes?—Very often valuers will allow half the manures on the next year; but you see when we grow a crop of corn probably part of the field has been potatoes, part mangolds and part swedes, and the manurial residue of swedes would perhaps not be as great as on the others, so we have simply taken it as an estimate, and rather a low one.

6683. When you have manures to the value of about £20 10s., you have a considerable sum?—If we had taken the manurial residue on the basis that a valuer would have taken it, it would have increased the cost further than is stated in these particulars.

6684. On the potato crop?—It would have increased the cost on the corn, because that would go to the corn. You get corn after that potato crop.

6685. I admit that; but it would certainly reduce this figure?—Yes. You are quite entitled to deduct off the cost of the potatoes what you put on to your corn.

6686. In the case of growing mangolds, No. 10, is the estimate of the manurial residue there based on Cheshire valuers' basis?—No, it is not so high.

6687. You have carried these manurial residues, such as you have allowed, to the cost of cropping cereals?—Yes.

6688. *Mr. Batchelor*: Dealing with your cost of potatoes, do you spray your potatoes?—No, I have not done so; but many farmers do spray their potatoes, and that would add to the cost. Of course that is the up-to-date method.

6689. You are aware that in the Corn Production Act the cereals dealt with are wheat and oats, and that in the temporary guarantee given for 1919 there has also been added barley?—Yes.

6690. Is it only in regard to those three crops that you suggest there should be a guarantee given; or do you suggest, as I rather think you did in answer to Mr. Thomas Henderson, that all crops should have a minimum guarantee? Did you mean that?—No, I did not mean to suggest that.

6691. Only cereals?—Yes.

6692. *Mr. Overman*: Mr. Ashby has taken you through your course of growing wheat; but there is one item on No. 5 which you begin with "Cleaning stubbles"; does that represent cultivation?—It is necessary to clean that stubble for wheat. That is grown, as I state here, on land ploughed up during the war—turf; and it is necessary for the benefit of the cropping and the yield that that land should be cleaned.

6693. But what form did it take?—The land was ploughed with the ordinary plough skimpéd, and then worked through all the course with the different implements, and then reploughed for wheat. We have had some very serious failures in our district through land not being properly dealt with in that way, and being ploughed up just one furrow.

6694. I quite agree with you; but that item appears to me to be very low just as ploughing, because it includes ploughing and no doubt several harrowings.—We ploughed with the double ploughs, and that would make a little difference, whereas we could not plough with the double furrow ploughs—not one furrow.

6695. Then your weeding is again 1s. Is that simply stubbing the thistles?—Yes, docks, or anything there is.

6696. Have you ever looked into the cost of your weeding to see whether you could get a man to walk over, say, eight acres a day?—Yes, I think we can do that. I mean if the land is properly cultivated, that lessens the cost of weeding. On the land which is not properly cultivated, it would cost a great deal more.

6697. Your land is more suitable to growing wheat than growing oats, is not it?—Yes, very much more.

6698. You do not grow very heavy crops of oats?—No.

6699. What would you average?—The average is rather low. I am afraid five quarters would be a fairly good average.

6700. What is the tonnage of potatoes that you generally grow per acre?—You mean the average?

6701. Yes?—It is a good crop, 10 tons to the acre. We should not get that average.

Mr. Rea: You mentioned that the Co-operative Wholesale Society were taking over a good many of the farms?—Yes.

6702. Are they working these individual farms, or have they taken blocks of land and thrown them together?—They have bought a number of farms together.

6703. Do they work them as one big industrial farm, or do they still keep the farms working separately?—Some of the farms have managers. They have a manager at their largest farm, and he is really responsible for the whole of the working. Then he has managers at the other farms under him.

6704. To what extent of land about have they taken up in one block?—About 1,000 acres.

6705. That is about the largest of the blocks they have taken?—Yes, in a block.

6706. That comprises several farms?—Yes.

6707. Do they work it as one, or do they still keep the individual farms?—I think they work the farms individually, but there is one head over the whole.

6708. They do not co-operate; they do not carry out their own system as regards the farms, and co-operate as to the use of machinery, and so on?—No.

6709. You say that you have hopes of the extension of co-operation among farmers?—Yes.

6710. Will you develop that a little and say what lines they could do it on?—You see there is a strong movement in starting milk factories for one thing; and then I think they could do very good work in starting wholesale slaughter houses among the farmers themselves.

6711. Have you any organisation to-day for the purpose of buying cakes, manures, and so on?—Yes, we have the Farmers' Association. We have what is called the Cheshire, Shropshire and North Wales Farmers' Association, which does a very big work in that way. I am one of the directors of that Association.

6712. Then you find you can get your materials more cheaply through the Association than through dealers?—Yes, and then we have the advantage of getting our stuff at the lowest market price, and being sure of the quality. We analyse free of cost, and all that kind of thing, and if it is not up to standard, of course returns are made. That is the way in which it is worked for the benefit of the farmers.

6713. Do the farmers take to it pretty kindly? Are most of the farmers members?—Yes, we have a very large membership. I could not give you the number now, but pre-war our turnover was £250,000 a year in our own concern.

6714. One has heard hints in some places that there is a difficulty in getting members, because many of the farmers are in debt to private traders and cannot very well leave them. You have not any such experience?—No; and at every directors' meeting we have had for a long time now, I have not been at one but what we have had a fresh application for shares.

6715. You have been asked a good many questions about the sale of farms, and farmers buying their own land. I think you have given your opinion that farmers do not buy their farms because they want to, but because otherwise they would be faced by being thrown out of occupation?—Yes.

6716. And as a rule, I suppose, they do not know any other business?—That is so.

6717. And they have to work at this?—Yes.

6718. So that if they do not buy their farms, they are faced possibly with the workhouse?—Yes.

6719. It is really a matter of necessity and not a matter of choice?—Yes.

6720. On the question of guaranteed prices for corn, I think the only figure which has been put before you was for four years. Do you think that is long enough?—No, I do not.

6721. Do not you think the farmers want eight or ten years to give them confidence?—Yes, it would be very much better. I stated not less than five years.

6722. You do not think five is enough?—No.

6723. It wants eight or ten years, you think?—Yes, I quite agree.

6724. *Dr. Douglas*: You said to us, I think, if I quite understood you, that if there were no guarantees, it would be your intention and policy to reduce your production of cereals?—That would be the natural consequence.

6725. And that would be general?—Yes.

6726. In your district, would that mean a considerable reduction of employment?—Not necessarily so.

6727. Why not?—On the large dairy farms they need the labour for the other work. It would mean a reduction in the machinery that would be needed for dealing with this work.

6728. Do you conduct your dairy farms partly by arable production? Do you use a good deal of your own material?—Yes; we use a good deal of our own oats and roots for the winter milk production.

6729. I think, in answer to Mr Thomas Henderson, I understood you to say that you propose a guarantee not on the acreage cultivated, but on the actual crop produced?—Yes.

6730. Do you not think that would be very difficult to administer? You recognise that that would be a departure from the method of the Corn Production Act?—Yes, it may be difficult to administer; but I think it would be fairer.

6731. Let us take that point. If you give a guarantee according to the amount of production, would not that give a larger advantage to the man whose land produces, say, 10 quarters of oats to the acre, than to the man whose land produces four quarters?—If he could produce 10 quarters to the acre, he must have been putting in a great deal more energy.

6732. He may have had better land?—Yes, he may have had better land. There might be a disadvantage to the man with poor land in that respect.

6733. But does the man with good land need any encouragement?—In some cases he does.

6734. Does not he generally need less encouragement than the man with poor land?—The man with poor land certainly needs more encouragement than the other.

6735. Take it from the point of view of production. If you want to increase production, to whom would you need to offer the inducement—to the man with good and suitable land, or the man with the less suitable land?—The greater encouragement, certainly, to the man with poor land.

6736. And your suggestion would have the opposite effect?—My suggestion of paying on the crop?

6737. Yes?—It might to some extent.

6738. Do not you think that is rather a serious objection?—It might be.

6739. Do not you think it would entail a considerable waste of public money, if the guarantee ever did fall to be paid, that it should be paid to the man who did not need it at all rather than to the man who needed it most?—You see it is very difficult to answer that question, because even the man with the poor land by good farming can bring his yield of crops up.

6740. When land fell out of cultivation on account of the fall in prices, was it chiefly the less productive land, or the more productive land?—The less productive land.

6741. And is not that land the problem you have to deal with?—Yes; that is, to a large extent, the difficulty.

6742. Do not you think that points rather to a guarantee by acreage cultivated, subject to security being taken that the land is well-cultivated, than a guarantee on the total amount produced?—Yes; from that point of view it certainly would be better for the man with poor land.

6743. And you agree also that the purchase of the entire crop, which would be the only method of administering a guarantee on the amount produced, would be a very complicated transaction for the State to enter into?—Yes.

6744. Have you ever thought how it could be administered?—No, I have not thought that out.

6745. Do not you think it would be rather difficult for this Commission to recommend a method of dealing with the subject, without being able to suggest a plan as to how it could be administered?—Yes.

6746. You spoke about the necessity for co-operation, as to which I think there is pretty general agreement, in theory at all events; and you spoke particularly of co-operation in the use of machinery. What size of farms were you referring to when you spoke of the matter of co-operation in the use of machinery? I want to know what is in your mind?—I think it referred chiefly to the buying of the machinery for the farmers.

6747. There was that point also; and there is no difference between the buying co-operatively of cake, or manures, or anything else. I think it was Mr. Walker who asked the question, and I think he intended to refer to the co-operative use of machinery. Did you understand him so?—No, not quite in that way. Of course that would apply more to the smaller farms.

Mr. Parker: The question was put and he answered "yes."

6748. *Dr. Douglas*: Yes; I rather wondered whether he understood the question?—It would apply in that way to the smaller farms.

6749. But only a limited number of implements?—Yes.

6750. You could not have a number of farms sharing a reaper and binder, because they would all want it at the same time?—Yes.

6751. May I take it you wish to add to your former answer, that it will only apply to a very limited number of implements?—Yes, in the smaller farms; but, of course, we have a very large percentage of

small farms in Cheshire. I think it would be of advantage if the figures you asked for were given now.

6752. Yes; but I take it you agree it would be a limited number of implements?—Yes.

6753. *Mr. Rea*: You said you estimate the necessary capital as from £25 to £30 per acre. Did you mean that to apply to dairy farms only, or to all farms?—Mixed dairy and arable farms.

6754. *The Chairman*: The Commission are very much obliged to you?—Will you now allow me to put in these figures?

6755. *The Chairman*: Yes?—The figures are as follows.

NUMBER AND ACREAGE OF FARMS.

Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
1–5	5–20	20–50
3,139	3,480	2,148
50–100	100–150	150–300
1,715	931	701
	Over 300	
	76	

(The Witness withdrew.)

MR. P. W. CLARKSON, The Milk Producers' Association, called and examined.

6756. *Chairman*: You will allow me to put in this note, to be recorded with your evidence?—Yes.

(Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.)

(1) MILK PRODUCTION.

Size of farm, 141 acres.
Rental, £249 per annum.
Chiefly heavy soil and part very wet.

***As Cropped* in 1918.**

	Acres.	
Cow pasture	37	
Horses and young stock	24	
Wheat	27	Yield per acre, 3½ qrs.
Oats	12	,, nearly 4 ,,
Mixed corn	7	,, ,, 4 ,,
Roots	6	Estimated crop, 180 tons.
Potatoes	6	
Clover	19	Estimated crop, 36–37 tons.

Average number of stock kept: 35 cows, 20 young stock, 5 horses, 3 colts.

(2) *Milk yield from May 1st, 1918 to May 1st, 1919.*

—	Galls.	Cost of production. £ s. d.	Receipts. £ s. d.
From 1st May to 30th Sept.	10,499	654 18 5	689 17 1
From 1st Oct. to 31st Jan.	5,848	898 1 6	589 3 4
From 1st Feb. to 30th April	4,683	625 12 6	549 6 6
Totals	21,030	2,178 12 5	1,828 6 5

Loss, £350 6s.

(3) *First Period: May 1st to September 30th*, 1918.

Total yield of milk, 10,499 gallons.
Average per cow per day, 2 gallons.

	£ s. d.
Receipts	689 17 1
Costs	654 18 5
	£34 18 8

Details of costings—	£ s. d.	
May 1st to 12th—1 ton hay	6 0 0	
1 ,, straw	3 0 0	
4 tons roots at 50s.	10 0 0	
Whole period—Cake, meals, &c.	281 0 0	
Pasture (including manures and labour)	144 16 0	
Aftermath (21 acres)	21 0 0	
Labour	76 12 0	
Depreciation loss on cows	106 0 0	
Rent and rates on buildings	7 10 7	
Depreciation of machinery and dairy utensils at 10 per cent.	7 5 10	
Repairs	2 10 0	
Washing utensils	11 9 6	
Whitewashing shippens, twice	2 0 0	
Fencing, &c.	7 12 0	
Delivery to station, at ½d. per gallon	22 10 0	
	689 5 11	
Deductions—		
10 calves	£18 7 6	
Manurial values	16 0 0	
	34 7 6	
	£654 18 5	

(4) *Second Period: October 1st 1918, to January 31st*, 1919.

Total quantity of milk produced, 5,848 gallons.
Yield per cow per day, 1·4 gallons.

	£ s. d.
Receipts	589 3 4
Costs	898 1 6
Loss	£308 18 2

Details of costings—	£ s. d.	
Home-grown fodder, including hay, straw and roots	426 0 0	
Home-grown grains	50 8 0	
Cakes, meal, &c., purchased	230 7 6	
Pasture (14 acres close root at 10s. per acre, and 5 acres rape at 40s. per acre	17 0 0	
Labour	107 6 0	
Depreciation and loss on cows	80 7 10	
Rent and rates on buildings	5 10 0	
Depreciation on machinery and dairy utensils	5 16 8	
Repairs	2 0 0	
Washing utensils, &c.	9 5 6	
Delivery to station	18 9 0	
	952 10 6	
Deductions—		
6 calves	£6 3 0	
Manurial values	48 6 0	
	54 9 0	
	£898 1 6	

(5) *Third Period: February 1st to April 30th*, 1919.

Total yield of milk, 4,683 gallons.
Average per cow per day, 7 quarts.

	£ s. d.
Receipts	549 6 0
Costs	625 12 6
Loss	£76 6 6

Details of costings.

Not set out owing to lack of time (*see* Appendix No. I).

STATEMENT SHOWING INCREASE IN COST OF MILK PRODUCTION DUE TO INCREASE IN WAGES.

	May 1st, 1918, to May 1st, 1919. Per week. £ s. d.	May 1st, 1919, to May 1st, 1920 Per week. £ s. d.
Man and youth attending cows at 12s. per day	3 12 0	4 4 0
Three milkings at 8d. per hour, 3 hours 2s. each	1 16 0	2 8 0
	£5 8 0	£6 12 0
	s. d.	s. d.
Saturday afternoon, 3 men, 1½ hours at 9d.	3 4	4 6
Sunday, 3 men and youth 4 hours at 10d.	10 0	15 0
	13 4	19 6

	s. d.	
Increase per week 6 days, £1 4s. ...	4 0	per day.
Add increase Saturday and Sunday	0 10½	,,
	4 10½	

Equals £80 per annum.

(*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*)

Chairman: Dr. Douglas will begin the questions.

6757. *Dr. Douglas*: You are, to a very large extent, a dairy farmer, I think?—Yes.

6758. Your chief product is milk, is it not?—Yes.

6759. I see the total size of your farm is 141 acres, of which 37 acres is cow pasture. Do you find that a sufficient amount of pasture; or do you supplement it largely?—The shortage of pasture is due chiefly to the War Executive begging us to plough all the land that we could plough; and we have had to manage with as little pasture as possible and help them as much as possible with artificials, trusting to the aftermath to help us out.

6760. But it is less pasture than you would wish?—Yes.

6761. And you do have to supplement it by feeding all summer?—Yes, very heavily.

6762. Then I come to your returns. I see you milk 35 cows?—Yes.

6763. Your total of milk from the 1st May, 1918, to the 1st May, 1919, was about 21,000 gallons. Was that given by these 35 cows?—Yes.

6764. And was that about 600 gallons for each cow?—I change my cows very frequently; they are not all the same cows.

6765. Do you breed your own young stock?—A few of them.

6766. But I take it you do not keep a cow during her dry period, or at all events you do not carry on the same cow from year to year?—No; I change about one-third of them as a rule, not always.

6767. So this represents not simply a lactation from each of 35 cows; but it represents that, supplemented by part of the lactation of other cows produce?—Yes.

6768. So that the total yield per cow is not 600 gallons?—I have not worked it out.

6769. Your results over the year show a loss of something like £10 a cow. Have you any previous figures to compare that with—I mean pre-war figures?—No. This is the only year I have figured out.

6770. May I take it that you have been conducting a dairy on these same lines more or less for some time?—Have you been on your present farm for some time?—I have been on the present farm four years last March.

6771. And previously were you dairying?—I was 10 years in Nottingham on an arable farm there; but previous to that I had lived on a dairy farm all my life.

6772. You were conducting this dairy four years ago?—Yes.

6773. Has your experience during the previous years been the same financially, that you have lost money on your dairy?—No, much better. This last year has been very exceptional.

6774. But that was before the drought of this summer. These figures do not include the drought of the present summer?—No; they include from May, 1918, to May, 1919.

6775. Then why do you think the dairy has been so much less profitable during that period than it was before?—Last summer we were short of pasture. In the August of last year we had a very unfavourable season for producing milk. We had a lot of wet weather about August, and I had rather a big loss in cattle just about that time. The cows broke to the bull did not come quite under notice as they should have done at the back end, and the cows were not in condition to sell off without great loss and replacing them. My dairy should be kept up at least two-thirds in the winter to what it is in the summer, so I could not change, as my cowsheds were full up and I had to use a tremendous lot of corn and artificial feeding.

6776. Generally, do you wish us to take it that there were a number of special circumstances connected with this year's working, so that it is not really representative? Did all these unfortunate things happen to other people as well?—Yes.

6777. Some of them, but not all?—I was not the only one in our district who had a bad time of it the latter part of last year.

6778. Really on account of prices being inadequate? Yes.

6779. How do you make up the depreciation or loss on cows which you mention in your third paragraph? Was that normal or special? Was it accidents of some kind? Is it an actual figure or calculation, the £106?—I will tell you the basis I worked on. During that period, that is, from May to the end of September, I bought six cows for £288 10s., the average cost of which was £48 1s. 8d. I sold three for £38 5s. during last summer. Three of those I bought in at the average of £48 1s. 8d. would realise £114 5s. The three I sold for £38 5s. deducted from the £144 leaves a balance of £106. I might add to that statement, that in the latter part of August I had a very good cow, for which I had given £40 the year previous when cows were much cheaper. I found her with a very bad cold a few days off calving. She had pneumonia, and she died in a few hours. Then a little previous I lost another cow through a bad udder. These are the things we have to contend with.

6780. Then these represent incidental accidents that happen?—The actual loss in that period on cows.

6781. On the next page you have, "Home-grown fodder, including hay, straw and roots." How are those charged?—The home-grown fodder is charged at £7 15s. per ton. It was worth £8 at the station, and I only live a mile away.

6782. You charged it at rather less than market price?—Yes, I have charged £7 15s.

6783. And straw?—Straw, £4 a ton.

6784. That was in excess of the restricted price, was it not?—Later on I had to pay 85s. I bought a lot of oat straw later on.

6785. So that you average it between the £3 15s. to which you were entitled for your own and the £4 5s. you paid?—Yes.

6786. Have you or have other dairymen in your district, considered the question that you have heard put to-day, about the possibility of a Government guarantee for cheese?—Cheese does not concern me at all.

6787. No; but the price of cheese very closely affects the price of milk, does it not?—Yes, it does.

6788. If cheese was at a high price during the spring and summer months, that absorbs a considerable amount of milk and takes it out of market competition?—Yes, that is true.

6789. In that way it is suggested that at that period of the year the price of milk might be steadied if the Government guaranteed the price of cheese? Has the subject been considered at all in your district, or have you anything to say about it?—The only way in which it has been considered is that we think the cheesemakers are having the better of it. We do not think it is quite fair. That is the only aspect of the case we have considered.

6790. You have not considered it in its more general aspect?—No. Mr. Sadler would perhaps answer further on that question later on.

6791. *Mr. Rea*: Your losses on the whole of the year last year were in the last two quarters, or at least two-thirds?—Yes.

6792. In spite of the bad summer you made a profit in the summer?—Yes.

6793. And in the other two periods you made a loss?—Yes.

6794. Is that a usual thing in your dairying, I mean that you look to the summer to make a sufficient profit to carry the winter losses?—Not altogether. What I have tried to show in these figures is this, that it has not paid the dairy farmer to feed his cattle with his produce. It would have paid him better to have been without the milk and to have sold his produce. That is the main point I want to show in regard to last winter's production of milk.

6795. In the second period from the 1st October to the 31st January, the cost of production has been almost exactly 3s. a gallon, on your figures?—I have not worked it out in detail.

6796. I have worked it out. Then on the basis of prices of this year compared with last year, do you think the cost of production will be greater than 3s.?—I am afraid that the cost will be much greater for the coming winter than it was last winter. The root crop in Cheshire in many places will not be a third of what it was last year; and we find that cakes and meals are up quite £5 per ton, with the exception of bean flour. I might have pointed out that in this second quotation that I have made out, at one period I was forced to buy bean flour, a thing I did not want to touch, which cost £37 a ton. No one can produce milk on bean flour at that price; but feeding stuffs were very scarce about Christmas. With the exception of bean flour, I think other cakes and meals are up about £5 a ton to what they were last winter.

6797. So that the cost of production will be greater?—Yes; and, of course, the hay crop is not more than two-thirds.

6798. Then from the 1st February to the 3rd April, the cost of production decreases somewhat, about 3d a gallon, roughly, I think?—The milk went up somewhat. The cows began to calve about the latter end of January.

6799. So that you had a bigger yield per cow?—Yes.

6800. Otherwise the cost of the actual feeding would be as great in that period?—Yes.

6801. *Mr. Batchelor*: Would you look at your statement for the 1st May to the 30th September, 1918? You start from May 1st to May 12th—1 ton of hay £6: that would be 1917 hay, I presume?—Yes.

6802. Then: 1 ton of straw £3, and 1 ton of roots at 50s.; but the figure extended is £10. Is that 4 tons of roots?—Yes, it is a mistake; it should have been 4 tons.

6803. What value of machinery and dairy utensils, altogether, have you in your premises?—£170.

6804. Have you a milking machine?—No.

6805. What is the largest item making up that £170?—I have an engine pulper, mealcake crusher, chop cutter, refrigerator, milking cans, and about 16 churns, milking cans, etc.

6806. In each of the two detailed statements, am I right in understanding that the item called "Depreciation loss on cows," £106 in the one case, and £80 7s. 10d. in the other are actual losses sustained?—Yes, that is so.

6807. In the second of these periods, you have already told us what the price for hay and straw was. What are you putting the prices of roots at?—50s.

6808. Was that a market price?—In our district they were selling swedes when they were pulling them up, at £3 a ton, put on rail.

6809. Right up to that period?—Yes, right up to Christmas.

6809A. You have pretty heavy cake bills?—Yes.

6810. Would these be at the controlled prices?—Yes.

6811. What particular kind of cake did you use? Was it linseed cake?—In the summer time when I can get it, I usually use undecorticated cotton cake and Indian meal. When I cannot get these I use compound cake or meal.

6812. You feed your cows pretty heavily?—The ration is about 7 lbs. of cake and meal per day.

6813. For that, what quantity of milk do you expect per day—two gallons in the summer period and one and a half gallons in the winter?—It would average about a gallon and a half in the winter.

6814. For 7 lbs. of concentrated feeding?—Yes.

6815. Do you think you get full value for your concentrated foodstuffs if that is all the milk they give you?—I think you know as well as I do that a lot of the foodstuffs have not had the value in them they used to have.

6816. I agree with you. Have you any idea if you had put in home-grown fodder including hay, straw and roots at what it would cost you to produce them what effect that would have on the amount of loss, or profit?—I have not worked it out on that basis. I remember last February when the Commission was asking for evidence, they gave permission to the farmers to charge their produce to the cows at the same prices they could sell it at, and I think it is the only fair way.

6817. So that is the basis you have gone on?—Yes.

6818. *Mr. Ashby*: Are these yields stated in your evidence-in-chief in three periods actually recorded yields either from cows or receipts from milk?—They are the actual yields from the receipts for milk.

6819. You charge your hay, straw and roots at market prices?—Yes.

6820. If you were selling them as you are selling them to your cows' account, would there be some profit on the cultivation of the hay, straw and roots?—There would have been a very good profit on the roots. I had a tremendously heavy crop.

6821. You show, roughly, a loss of £350 on these cows, which is very closely £2 10s. an acre on the farm. As you have made a considerable profit on your roots and hay, that loss on the farm is not £2 10s., but some lower figure?—I wanted to point out this, that we have been to a lot of expense and trouble in producing this milk last winter, when we might have taken it far more easily, and sold our produce without trouble. That is what I have tried to show. Does that answer your question?

6822. Is your ordinary business dairying business?—Yes; it is rather a mixed farm, but chiefly dairying.

6823. But on the 141 acres, where you have 35 cows, much the biggest proportion of the business must be the dairy business?—Yes; that is due to the War Executive.

6824. Did they make you keep the cows?—They made me plough this land. It is like this: I have one of the best dairymen that ever had a pair of boots on; and I know if I lessened his supply he would not get another dairy, and it is my duty to him to stand by him.

6825. But you would have been able to stand by him without meeting so much loss yourself, had it not been for the expense with the cows at the end of last summer?—I admit that the cows served me rather badly at the back end of the year; but these are difficulties that we are often faced with.

6826. But the depreciation on your cows last year was much more than the average and ordinary depreciation?—If you take a dairy farm for a number of years, you may get one year that is perhaps three times as bad as the other three or four years. They never run in a line.

6827. This was the year which was three or four times as bad as the other years?—It was very bad.

6828. So that your average depreciation is about one-third or one-fourth of this?—I am not going to say that.

6829. This is quite an extraordinary account, which you could not apply generally to the farms in Cheshire, even last year, and you could not apply it as regards the yield of milk on your own farm for a number of years, because of the peculiar conditions in the herd at the end of last summer?—I said before, I admitted my cows had not done quite as well as they might have done at the back of the year; but I do know of other dairy farms where they have even done worse than mine.

6830. To come back to the question of loss, have you any account in any farm whatever, or even say a bank pass-book, which would show this actual loss of £350?—I do not see exactly that the bank pass-book would have a deal to do with the dairy part of the business, because I have the other part of the farm. I have not two separate accounts.

6831. Then you do not know that you have lost this £350 on the whole of the farm?—I have not lost the £350 on the whole of the farm.

6832. So that, as a matter of fact, the farming business is much better than is shown on this statement for the dairy?—Yes, I agree with you.

6833. *Mr. Cautley*: Is this a typical Cheshire dairy farm?—Yes, in my district it is.

6834. There are a great many more like it?—Yes, there are.

6835. Do you put your cows to the bull again, or do you sell them out?—As a rule, I change about one-third of them.

6836. Do they then go to the butcher, or are they sold to other dairy farmers?—They are then sold to the butcher.

6837. It is not what they call town dairying, where they simply buy the new calf-cow, feed it all the time, and sell it to the butcher?—No, I sell only about one-third of the stock. Perhaps I may sell a few calvers in the spring. I do not usually keep as many cows in the summer as I do in the winter.

6838. Do you bring up calves and breed them, or do you sell them?—I sell the majority of them. I rear perhaps six or eight per year.

6839. The heifer calves?—Yes.

6840. And the rest you sell?—Yes.

6841. Is this milk that you give us, the milk that you sell, or the milk that the cows give?—It is the milk I have sold.

6842. So, in addition to this milk, you have also had the milk which has been used to bring up calves?—My calves do not get much milk.

6843. They must get it for three or four weeks, anyway, do not they?—Yes; it is an error on my part that I have not included this milk in the costings. I bring them on to calves' meal in about a fortnight.

6844. I notice it works out at about 600 gallons a year. Is that a good yield or a bad yield or an average yield in your country?—Under the circumstances I should consider it fair. We have not had pasture enough. We have not been able to get hold of the right class of cake that we should like to have done sometimes; and all these things have materially decreased the output of milk.

6845. Cheshire is a good dairy country, is it not?—Yes.

6846. And would these be average farmers' cows; they are a good class of cows, are not they?—Yes.

6847. And these would be the average in the country?—Yes.

6848. Do you tell us you have done as well as the average dairy farmer?—It is rather a difficult question to answer, because I have not had the privilege of looking at other people's books; but I should consider I have done about the average that other farmers have done.

6849. As a matter of fact, you would have been £350 better off if you had not been in the dairy business at all?—Yes, that is so.

6850. Were you satisfied with the prices that were fixed last year?—No.

6851. They were too low?—Yes.

6852. Were they too low for an average year, or simply because you had a bad season?—They were too low for a winter like last winter, when the difficulties were so great. At the beginning of the winter I advocated nothing less than 2s. 6d. I could see it was not going to pay at 2s. 3d. I think that that was what our Association recommended.

6853. What difficulties do you specially refer to?—There was a great difficulty in getting Indian meal about Christmas.

6854. In getting feeding-stuffs?—Yes, in getting feeding-stuffs. There was great difficulty.

6855. And that continued?—That continued most of the winter.

6856. That is one difficulty. What is the next difficulty?—I ought to mention there, that the difficulty was increased owing to the fact that we could not get the decordicated cotton meal and Indian meal, which, I think, are the two finest milk producers there are, and we had to fall back on compounds and bean flour, which is excessively dear. Then at Christmas we began to feel a little the effect of the shortage of the hours and the increased wages of labour.

6857. Those were the two chief difficulties?—Yes.

6858. How much labour do you use for your 35 cows?—Do you mean apart from the milking?

6859. No, including the milking?—About two men besides myself and a youth.

6860. Do you milk yourself?—I do.

6861. Do you find any difficulty in getting labour?—Yes. It has been very unsettled in our district for this last couple of years. We find a great difficulty in getting the skilled men. There are very few cottages on our farms.

6862. I am speaking of dairy labour for looking after cows, and not ordinary farm labour. Has that got worse during the last year or so?—Yes.

6863. Can you give me any reason why it has got worse?—A lot of the men went away to the war, and they have not returned, or those who have returned, have not all settled down back to the farm industry. They have not in our district; and the outsde labourers that you get are, of course, inefficient milkers. There is no question we have been bothered for skilled labour.

6864. Has that improved: is the labour prospect improving or getting worse?—I think generally there is a slight improvement.

6865. Is that any objection to the Sunday labour necessary in milk production?—I know in some cases where there has been so little profit out of the milk business, speaking now of the smaller dairies, the farmer and his family have done all the milking from Saturday noon to Monday morning instead of paying overtime.

6866. That is to save the overtime?—Yes; but in my case I have not found any difficulty in the men coming at the week-end.

6867. In your own case you have found no difficulty; but I am asking you generally as you come to speak for the county generally?—Yes.

6868. Is there a complaint about the difficulty of getting milkers over the week-end for Sunday labour?—Yes, there is.

6869. Can you suggest any remedy for that?—I think the chief remedy in regard to skilled labour in our part of Cheshire would be the erection of cottages on the farms. There are very few farms with cottages to them.

6870. How would the building of cottages get over the objection to working on the Sunday?—You see the young single men we have to trust to, when they get to a certain age generally get married and leave farming work altogether, and go somewhere else where they can get a house.

6871. You are short of houses there?—Yes. I think that difficulty in regard to the skilled farming part of the business would be got over by the erection of cottages on the farms.

6872. Then there is not really the objection to Sunday labour in milking?—No, not generally.

6873. Is there any trouble about the Saturday half-holiday?—It is not generally followed out. The farmers prefer paying overtime till 4 o'clock on a Saturday. I think they take this view of it; that it is far better to keep the men on the place till 4 o'clock than lose the men at 12 on Saturday, and have them return again in the evening to do the milking.

6874. Can the milking be done before 4?—It is done.

6875. And the men are content to do that?—Yes.

6876. Do you think that is a satisfactory arrangement, and that the men will not insist on their Saturday half-holiday?—No. You see, that is the rule they are following out.

6877. You say there is a great desire now that men should have a half-holiday?—It is a thing that I have never agreed with—finishing at noon on a Saturday.

6878. I was going to ask you whether you have any suggestion to make to meet that difficulty; but the difficulty, I understand, has not arisen in Cheshire?—No, with exceptional cases. I do know one farm where they have a milking plant, where the men do leave on Saturday at noon, and the master and the boy attends to milking in the afternoon.

6879. But the boy has to miss his Saturday afternoon?—Yes.

6880. Is there any plan which the Cheshire Dairy Farmers have for getting over this trouble so that the men may have a half-holiday on Saturday?—No, I do not think I can suggest anything.

6881. What in your view is it that the milk farmer requires to put his industry into a satisfactory condition; is it better prices?—Yes. I think the difficulty as regards summer-time will be overcome somewhat by getting a little bit more land down to grass again undoubtedly.

6882. Stopping there for one moment, the general opinion is that milk can be produced better on arable land than on grass?—Yes; but it is not all land that is suitable for catch cropping, and our land is not suitable for catch cropping.

6883. You think, although your land is two-horse land, it is too strong for catch cropping?—Yes; it is too wet.

6884. I should like you to see our land in Sussex. I was asking you if you could tell me what it is the Cheshire Dairy Farmers want to put their industry on a satisfactory businesslike footing? Either the price of corn and cake will have to be brought down during the winter months, or otherwise the price of milk will have to go up if the dairy industry is to be stimulated in our county.

6885. It comes to this, that you want cheaper feeding-stuffs or better prices for milk, or both? That is so.

6886. It is a pure question of price then, in your view of it?—Yes.

6887. If the price were satisfactory, have you any doubt that the Cheshire milk farming would be stimulated and would increase and supply the needs of the people?—I have no doubt of that whatever.

6888. Do you consider there is any difficulty in disposing of the summer milk as apart from the winter milk?—No. My own opinion is that rather too much milk is getting into the hands of the big dealers. I have been surprised this last few weeks on getting the Board's returns to see that milk was very plentiful in the large towns. I do know the fact that the retailers are very short of milk, but it is the wholesalers who have this milk in their hands.

6889. You, as a dairyman, are afraid of the Combine?—I am.

6890. The Combine amongst the middlemen?—I know that in one case in particular a wholesale man is getting hold of all the milk he can. I have a neighbour to whom if he has any particular flush he sends him word to make cheese of it, and gives him a penny a gallon to make the cheese. They are sending it to the factories and losing a penny a gallon on it there.

6891. That is done at the wholesaler's request, I understand?—Yes.

6892. Take the position of the Cheshire small dairy farmers: how would you suggest that they get rid of their flush of spring and early summer?—My suggestion is this, that every farmer should have a cheese vat in the house. We have, and we make a lot of cheese in the summer. We make as much as we can that will last us all the winter.

6893. You think it ought to be made into cheese in the summer so that the winter and the summer might balance?—Yes; I think it is a most useful thing. A farmer can have a cheese vat, so that when it is plentiful he can make a cheese or two.

6894. In your opinion, would the ordinary price which you can get for English cheese conduce to that being done, or would the price of cheese subject to outside competition be so low that that it ought not to be done?—I will refer that question to Mr. Sadler.

6895. But you have no other suggestion to make about the dairy business except prices, I understand. It is a pure question of price?—That is all, I think.

6896. *Mr. Dallas*: I want to ask you one or two questions on some things which you have replied to Mr. Cautley about. You talk about cottages, and that you thought a remedy was to have cottages on a farm?—Yes.

6897. Are you not aware that we have cottages on the farms in the South here, and that great numbers of the men object very much to living in these tied cottages?—I have had reason to experience the two sides of the question. I was farming in Nottingham 10 years, and in the district where I was living there were cottages on each farm. I found out when I went and also when I came back that the married men in these cottages in Nottingham were far more efficient and skilled than the men in Cheshire, and I put it down to the reason that the men had stayed on the farms right away through, whereas in Cheshire the single men left because there was no chance of getting married and settling down on the farm. They had to go to the town or wherever they could get houses.

6898. But I think you would probably find very great difficulty in getting the men to live in tied cottages, because everywhere where they are living in tied cottages to-day they want to get out of them the first moment they can?—That is the first time I have known of that difficulty.

6899. It is a very serious question down South; in fact, if you ask the men, they will tell you there is probably no question they feel stronger on than the question of the tied cottage, and Mr. Duncan tells me it is the same thing in Scotland, so I do not think you will find that is any remedy. You would probably find that the remedy was worse than the evil itself?—Well, we do want a more stable class of men in Cheshire.

6900. Would you not agree that that has been due and is due to the long hours and relatively low rate of wages?—It may be. We have not had time to settle down again yet after the war.

6901. For instance, take your wages to-day: 48s. a week. The Board of Trade figures are that the cost of living has gone up 115 per cent. during the period of the war, so that as a matter of actual fact your workers' wages are barely increased. There is a slight increase on what they were getting before the war, but very little?—I might say that we do not object to paying these wages, but we do not want the hours shortened too much.

6902. I know that; but what I want to say is this, that I think as the best men can get higher wages in other industries they will naturally go to the industries that pay them best, and that is why there may be something in what you say about the labour?—I agree there.

6903. *Mr. Duncan*: Is it necessary that any cottages you get should be on the farm?—No.

6904. So that even if you had cottages, even if they were not tied cottages, they might have the effect of giving a married man the opportunity of settling down?—Yes. Of course, the only objection to that is this, that if you have not cottages on the farm and if a man leaves you, you cannot get a cottage for his successor.

6905. What would the man remain there for if he was out of a job in the district?—I have known instances where it has been a job to get the cottage for a successor.

6906. Taking the county as a whole, that is a difficulty which would settle itself pretty easily if you had cottages available?—I think it would get over the difficulty very greatly in our part of Cheshire if there were more cottages in the immediate vicinity of the farms.

6907. Do you have any women milking on your farms?—Not often, except my wife.

6908. Is it possible to get the wives of the married men to milk?—Just at present I have no married men. I have never known it in our part of Cheshire where the married men's wives have gone out milking.

6909. You have given us evidence here as to the dairy side of your farm. Have you any statement covering the period from the 1st May, 1918, to the 1st May, 1919, showing the result of the whole of your operations?—No. I was only asked to get out the costs of the milk production alone during 12 months.

6910. Could you get out for us the cost of the whole of the operations for the same period?—I daresay I could.

6911. Would you supply those to the Secretary of the Commission?—Yes.

6912. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: You say you have six acres under roots?—Yes.

6913. And a crop of 180 tons?—Yes.

6914. Is that mangolds and swedes, or mixed?—It is mixed; part mangolds and part swedes.

6915. And you debit those to your cows, I think, at £2 10s. a ton?—Yes.

6916. That would give you a total value of roots of £450?—Yes.

6917. £75 an acre?—I have not worked it out, but your figures may be correct.

6918. I will work it out. £2 10s. a ton on 180 tons is £450, I think; that is to say, there is a yield of £75 per acre?—Yes.

6919. I suppose you concur in Mr. Goodwin's evidence on the cost of production?—Yes.

6920. In 1915 the cost of production of mangolds was £15 9s. 3d. You do not say what it was in 1917, but it would be a good deal less than the 1919 figure, which was £41 7s. 9d.?—Yes.

6921. Then swedes in 1915 were £11 11s. 3d., and in 1919 £31 7s. 9d. Could you tell us how much of these 180 tons were mangolds and how much were swedes?—I can tell you this, that there was an exceptionally good crop. This year I shall not average 10 tons.

6922. I am not disputing that. I am merely taking the figures you have given us?—I had one of the best crops of roots that I ever grew. I had 4 acres of mangolds and 2 acres of turnips.

6923. Taking it at the top figure of £41 7s. 9d. for mangolds, that would give you a profit of how much per acre on these figures? Your highest figure of cost of production for mangolds is £41, and that was the 1919 cost of production. I suggest that you can scale that down considerably for your 1917 cost of production?—I bought the 4 tons of roots that I used in May.

6924. You sowed your own roots the previous year? —Yes, and I bought these 4 tons in May, and I had to buy in May this year, too.

6925. Could you tell us what you sold your own old roots at?—I use them; I did not sell them.

6926. Did you put 50s. on these?—I cannot go back that far into the 1917 and 1918 winter.

6927. But, at any rate, taking these figures, that showed a very big profit on 6 acres of roots?—Some seasons we get a good crop of one variety and some seasons a bad one.

6928. I quite agree; but I am discussing your own figures. Was this an exceptionally heavy crop of roots?—I will take you back to, I think it was, 1915 or 1916. I had only 27 tons of mangolds on 6 acres. It was a very wet field. So you see we do not always grow a very big crop.

6929. No; but I suggest to you that if you work out the figures you will find it a great deal more than made up the loss in your milk?—No.

The Chairman: He will give us the accounts on the whole of the farm, and it will then be clear.

6930. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: You show us on page 4 that it cost you £18 to convey the milk to the station. Could you tell us why in delivering 5,848 gallons it cost you £18, whereas 10,000 gallons are delivered at £22 10s. Is it so much per gallon or so much per journey?—I will tell you the basis on which I calculated the cost of delivery. In the summer time I maintain that you can deliver milk cheaper than you can in the winter because you take perhaps one-third more milk to the station, and the cost of keeping your pony is heavier in the winter time. I have only charged 3s. per day for the delivery of the milk in the winter time and ½d. per gallon in the summer.

6931. I think you told one of the Commissioners that there are quite a number of farms in your County that are engaged in dairy work. Is there no room for organisation so that many of these journeys could be avoided? Could not one journey do for two or three farmers?—Not very well. The farms lie very widely apart. In some cases it might be done with a couple of farmers. But there is another thing to be considered. Unless you use motor power a farmer generally fills his float, and if he gets four or five tankards in his own float he has no room for anybody else's. Nearly all the milk is now delivered once a day, or it is in the winter time.

6932. Improved transportation would cheapen the delivery, would it not?—It is very questionable whether it could be cheapened unless you took it right through to Manchester. It is very questionable whether it could be cheapened just to deliver it to the station.

6933. Do you keep a record of the yield from each cow?—No.

6934. Then you may have amongst your herd a very poor milker?—Yes. And it has not been quite so easy this last couple of years to dispose of your bad milkers as it was in previous years, for this reason: there have been no cows allowed to be graded for slaughter that have had a calf in them. In Cheshire most of the bulls run out with the herds in the summer time, and these cows may have had to be kept until they have been five months in calf before you could get any meat on them, and when you took them to the auction they would not grade them, because they could feel the calf, and you had to take that cow back again.

6935. Did you tell us you were suffering from scarcity of labour?—We are suffering from a scarcity of skilled labour.

6936. Even with reduced hours and increased wages? —Yes. Labour has not settled down again to its former course of things. We have not as good a class of labour now as we had three years ago. I milk on an average myself every night and morning.

6937. Do you agree with me that were it not for the reduced hours and increased wages you would find that you would be far shorter of labour?—You would not get any, especially in the vicinity of the towns. For instance, opposite me there are four cottages; I have not been able to get one of them yet, but there is a railwayman who lives in one. He has to get to work at eight and finishes at five, and I believe he draws about 53s. a week, and his time is his own from Saturday at noon till Monday morning. That is an advance on our men.

6938. What capital do you sink per acre in your farm?—I think that the price in our case is much the same as Mr. Goodwin's—about £25 per acre.

6939. What interest do you expect on your capital? —That is a bit of a puzzler. It is not what we expect; it is what we get.

6940. But what would you expect, being a risky industry?—I do not feel disposed to answer that question. We generally make as much out of it as we can, and it has not been so much as some people think this last few years in regard to the dairying industry.

6941. Would you tell us what salary a farmer in your position is entitled to, apart from interest, for his labour and oversight?—I should not think I was well paid along with the price of the ordinary agricultural labourer if it was not over £3 per week.

Mr. Prosser Jones: That is very moderate, I think.

6942. *Mr. Lennard*: You spoke just now of cottages on the farm. I suppose you would agree that such cottages are often isolated and stand some distance from the village?—Yes.

6943. Do not you think that men who have left the villages for service in the Forces and have become accustomed during the war to camp life and having plenty of companions will greatly dislike the loneliness of isolated cottages?—There may be something in that.

6944. I suggest that if we are to attract the soldiers back to agriculture and keep them in the industry, one of the most important things of all is that they should have company and the chance of associating with their fellows without having to go a long walk to reach the village club or inn. Do you think there is something in that?—There is a lot of divergence in natures. Some men can spend their time at home and in the garden and with their family quite as much as others would seek the company of their fellow men.

6945. Yes; but do not you think that the experience of the war has rather increased the number of men who feel the need of what we might call club life?— Yes, perhaps so; but I do remember when I was in Nottingham, the men never seemed to hanker at all after club life; but that was before the war.

6946. *Mr. Parker*: I only want to ask you about those 4 cottages near the farm; to whom do they belong?—I am in the either happy position or unhappy position of living under 5 landlords, and these 4 cottages are really under one of them. I hold about 10 acres under this landlord, but the land and the cottages have been in the market for a number of years, and they have a lot of old tenants in them, and they did not want to let me have a cottage until there was one of them went out.

6947. With regard to the railway man: the Company have no houses to put their men in, I suppose?— No, I have never heard tell of any in our district.

6948. I think you said that you had not a married man?—Not at present.

6949. Where does the man who does your milking live; does he lodge with someone?—He sleeps on the farm.

6950. He lives with you and the boy?—Yes.

6951. I wanted to ask you also about the straw, which I was not quite clear about. I understood the restricted price for straw was £3 15s.?—Was that at the latter end of the year?

6952. Yes?—After the turn of the year I bought. I think it was, 6 or 8 tons, and I had to pay 85s. for it then.

6953. That was the thing that puzzled me. If the restricted price was £3 15s., who was to blame for charging you £4 5s.?—I do not know

6954. *Dr. Douglas*: Dealers' profits are allowed? I bought 8 tons, I believe, after Christmas.

6955. *Mr. Parker*: And it was not produced very near to you?—No.

6956. *Mr. Smith*: Could you tell us what price you are getting for your milk to-day?—1s. 8d. We generally calculate by the dozen quarts in Cheshire.

6957. Have you any figures worked up how much the cost of production has increased in dairy farming?—I do not know whether it will answer your question, but I have some figures here. Some gentleman asked about it earlier on. These are the prices in 1915. I got 10d. per gallon for my milk in the summer. I have not the figure for the winter at that period. Dairy meal was £6 7s. 6d. Decorticated cotton, £9; Indian meal, 10 guineas; and linseed, £10 7s. 6d. It averaged £9 1s. 3d. per ton. Now in 1919 the price for the summer works out at 1s. 7d. per gallon. I must include in that one-halfpenny for carriage. We did not get the carriage in 1915. The price of cake to-day is: dairy meal, £20; decorticated cotton cake, £25 10s.; Indian meal, £25 10s., and linseed £27. £98 the lot. The average is £24 10s. to-day. The increase in corn and cake is about 170 per cent. Labour has gone up from 25s. to about 55s., with overtime; and rates are up another 1s. in the £ from last year; so that you see milk did not increase 100 per cent., but corn and cake have gone up 170 per cent., and labour over 100 per cent.

6958. Of course, that would not cover all your costs; they would only be part of the costs?—These have been only part of the costs. I have been very rushed for time, and it is a terrible thing getting these statistics out for milk.

6959. You speak of the desirability of labour not being disturbed so much from the point of view of the farmer. Do not you think it desirable for you to be able to retain the best labour as far as possible?—Yes.

6960. Do you think you will be able to do that unless the labour conditions are sufficiently attractive from the point of view of hours as well as wages?—This being a new phase and something we have not been accustomed to, we cannot yet fall in with it. The greatest objection I have to this labour business has been this stopping at noon on a Saturday, and, of course, we have not observed it, as it is very nearly unworkable on our farms, especially on isolated farms. What are the youths to do on a Saturday till milking at night? If they have to hang about they are better working, and if they go away, there is no telling whether they will come back; they are several miles away from the town. The majority of us on the dairy farms run on to 4 o'clock and pay them over time for it. It is a very great question, and I have never been in favour of this noon on Saturday. My men are quite willing to go on till 4 o'clock, and I have put it to them both ways.

6961. But do not you think there will be a tendency for the young men, especially those who have taken part in the war and have associated with men from towns, to desire a week-end, and if in the towns or in the large centres close by they are working a 48-hour week and having a clear week-end, that may be a temptation for them to leave the countryside and go to the town?—I quite agree.

6962. Do you also agree that the men who have the tendency to go are generally the better workmen; that is, the men with more initiative in them?—As a rule, if a man takes to his work on the farm, he would not shift unless he has good reasons for shifting. Does that answer your question?

6963. I am just wondering whether it is your experience and your opinion that the man who would shift because he was dissatisfied or because he thought he would get something better, on the average be the better type of workman. It would not be good for the industry to be left with the inferior type and all the best go?—I do not think that in many cases the better class of man would leave the countryside if he was getting a wage, we will say, equal to the town wage, which although it might be a shilling or two less reckoned in the main would be as good, for the sake of having his week-end out. I do not think he would leave the country for the town for that reason, because the conditions are much healthier in the country than in the town.

6964. Do you think that would apply to the young man?—The younger man is not as reliable; you cannot vouch for him.

The Chairman: We are very much obliged to you.

(The Witness left the chair.)

Mr. J. SADLER, Secretary, Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture, and Cheshire Milk Producers' Association, called and examined.

6965. *The Chairman*: May we put in the print of the opinions which you desire to put before us without reading it?—Yes.

[*Evidence-in-chief handed in by the Witness.*]

I desire to put before the Commission the opinion of the two bodies I represent on two matters only:

(1) *The Hours of Labour on Farms.*

I would lay down a general principle that the ordinary hours of labour in any industry should be regulated by the conditions controlling that particular industry and any departure from or modification of such principle would be injurious to the industry and all those dependent upon it.

The county of Cheshire is largely devoted to dairy farming, of which the hours of milking form an integral part. As the secretion of milk by the cow is controlled absolutely by nature and is unalterable, it follows that the intervals between the milkings on each and every day should be as nearly equal as possible and any serious departure from such equal intervals between the two daily milkings being against nature produces ill results which may be summarised as follows:—

(*a*) The butter fat content of the milk produced after the longer interval is decreased, while the butter fat content of the milk produced after the shorter period is increased, causing grave risk of prosecution to the producer.

(*b*) In the full flush of the milking season considerable inconvenience and discomfort is caused to the cow.

(*c*) This has a distinct tendency to reduce the quantity of milk secreted and thus reduce the total output of milk in the country.

(*d*) As the whole community is closely interested in the quantity and quality of milk produced, unequal intervals of milking are an injury to the nation by reducing the one and causing variations in the other.

I consider that 58 hours per week (exclusive of Sundays) is the minimum below which the hours of men employed on dairy farms ought not to go. This would give 10 hours working time for 5 days and 8 on Saturday, which would make the intervals between milkings 10 and 14 hours which is in my opinion the irreducible minimum.

These hours can be secured in one of two ways.

(*a*) By fixing the 58 hours as the ordinary hours for dairy farms, and leaving Sundays only to be reckoned as overtime, or

(*b*) Shorter ordinary hours with overtime to cover the milking each day.

The former proposition is far the best and would not put an undue strain on any employee.

The danger of the second alternative would be that the overtime would be considered as not obligatory

to the employee, and I foresee great trouble and anxiety on the dairy farmer's part, when he is bound by train times and other unalterable conditions.

The settlement on an amicable basis of the labour problem and the security as to the ability of the dairy farmer to carry on with a fair degree of comfort lies at the very root of prosperous and profitable dairying and a full milk supply, and unless some such settlement is made considerable numbers of the best men will have to relinquish the business.

(2) *The Question of Transport.*

The successful carrying on of the farmers' business depends to a large extent on the question as to whether he can get the goods necessary for his business delivered to him cheaply and with regularity and also get the products of the farm put on the market cheaply, and, with regard to the more perishable articles, with little delay so as to secure their delivery in a good condition.

With regard to the former the cost of delivery whether by road, rail or water has increased very much of late owing chiefly to traders' charges, but the chief difficulty is in the delay, both as to manures and feeding stuffs. This delay which has become very serious, hampers him at every turn, delaying his farming operations and checking production.

With regard to the marketing of his produce, much loss is occasioned, particularly to his milk and cheese, through delay, mishandling and unsuitable vehicles, obviously increasing the cost of production and adding to the consumers' price.

The largely increased amount of requisites of the farm, brought about by more intensive farming, has not been provided for by any corresponding increase in transport facilities and if, as should be, maximum production in every direction is aimed at, the demands upon the various methods of transport will be enormously increased.

I suggest the following:—

A more complete unification of the different railway systems so as to minimise delay.

A thorough re-organization of our waterways to provide for the heavier traffic, such as grain, hay and straw, manures, feeding stuffs and cheese.

Collecting depots for milk in every suitable centre where under the farmers' own organization carried on co-operatively milk can be efficiently cooled, and where necessary pasteurised and sent forward in large consignments instead of a multitude of small consignments, effecting a large saving in time, labour and utensils.

Quicker and more convenient trains with a better type of vehicle for milk, particularly in the more remote districts, securing quicker and more regular delivery of milk, and also the return of empty churns, and reducing largely the very serious quantity of sour milk, particularly in the summer.

(*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*)

Chairman: Will you please begin to put questions to Mr. Sadler, Mr. Green.

6966. *Mr. Green*: You are the Secretary of the Cheshire Milk Producers' Association and of the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture?—Yes, and also of the Cheshire Dairy Farmers' Association.

6967. Do you farm on your own account?—Not now.

6968. You have a large knowledge of the Cheshire dairy farmers who are mostly small grass farmers, I imagine. Are they very keen about the guaranteed prices? I mean to say they have to buy their bran, their crushed oats and their meal for cows. Do you think the question of guaranteed prices, under the Corn Production Act, really affects them very much?—Yes, and I should include cheese.

6969. I was going to ask you about cheese. Is it very easy to put up cheese appliances on your dairy farms; and how much capital would it require to put them up, on an average sized farm?—The capital could be covered by perhaps £100.

6970. On a farm the size of Mr. Clarkson's?—Yes. I think so. I am speaking rather hastily, but one never knows what the value runs to now, and there is a better method.

6971. You have some very interesting remarks about transport. Do you not think a very good plan would be to imitate the Danish plan, of a large lorry passing the farm gate and collecting the churns and perhaps taking the whole of the parish's or neighbourhood's milk into the nearest market town? That would cheapen the cost of production, do not you think?—I am not sure it would cheapen it much. It is done to a considerable extent in Cheshire and will develop doubtless; but I am not sure that it cheapens the cost of the transport, except in this way, that where you have a number of small farmers, each one taking his one can or probably at most two cans, that man does not really reckon up what it costs him to deliver his milk, either to the station or his customer. My own opinion is that instead of costing him a half-penny a gallon on his dairy allowance by the Government, it can cost him 2d.

6972. You agree there would be a great saving in labour?—In regard to the small farmers, yes.

6973. If you had water laid on generally throughout the whole county, would it not be a great boon to the small dairy farmers for cooling milk, butter, and so forth?—That is a public water supply. We have it in a great many districts in Cheshire, but they do not use it for cooling milk if they can possibly help it, because it is not sufficiently cool. You get better results from well water. The public water supply which I have myself experience of, is not anything like as efficient for cooling milk as is the ordinary well water.

6974. But it would save labour considerably on the farm, would not it?—No, I do not see it. If you have a good water supply on the farm, it is better for milk cooling purposes than a public water supply.

6975. With regard to the cottage question, has your county made any general application for cottages for the parishes?—Yes, there is a scheme on.

6976. You seem to be rather adverse to the Saturday half holiday, but I do not know whether you are?—In principle, I am absolutely in favour of it, and would very much like to have it applied to myself too. But I am very much afraid the difficulties of adopting it on the dairy farms are almost insuperable.

6977. Do you expect to get the young fellows to come unless they get their half holidays?—I will be quite frank about it. The difficulty undoubtedly is in the comparisons which are made by the young men—and it has been largely accentuated owing to the experience of the war—who are working on the farms, where, at present, they are staying until 4 o'clock on the Saturday, and then are expected and hoped for, but not always realised, on the Sunday morning and the Sunday afternoon, and the men who are working in other industries. It is a very serious difficulty, and how to get over it I do not know.

6978. I put it to you, you would not expect to get the young men unless they have the half holidays assured them?—We shall either have to get them, or a great many people will have to relinquish dairy farming. That is the alternative.

6979. But the class of workmen most difficult for farmers to engage even before the war was milkmen, do not you agree?—On a dairy farm they are mostly milkmen.

6979A. Yes; but taking it throughout the country, the most difficult class of workman to engage was a milkman, because of the long hours and arduous labour?—Yes.

6980. So that the only way is to make their lives as comfortable as possible?—Yes, without destroying the industry.

6981. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: With regard to your first paragraph, you lay down a general principle that the ordinary hours of labour should be regulated by the conditions controlling that industry? I presume, in discussing these conditions and in formulating them, you are quite willing to recognise the wishes of labour?—Quite.

6982. They are a consenting party to those conditions?—May I add one word? It is the natural conditions that I refer to.

6983. You want to amend your *précis* to that extent?—I think after your question it looks as if it wants amending.

6984. I just wanted to make sure that that was your view?—Yes; the natural conditions.

6985. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: In Cheshire we have some large industries in addition to agriculture?—Yes.

6986. And labour, which is the only commodity a man has to offer, has two markets. He can either offer it to the railway men, or soap factory, or engineering factory, or to the farmer?—Yes.

6987. The railway men are offered 53s. up to 60s., and the farmers offer 33s. to 43s., say?—We have no such wages as those in Cheshire.

6988. What have you?—48s. for first grade of men.

6989. Is that the maximum?—No, by no means. That is the minimum for the first grade men.

6990. Is it near the 53s. that we were given by Mr. Clarkson?—48s. is the present arrangement for first grade men as a minimum.

6991. As compared with 53s. in the railway near by?—I do not know whether that is the minimum.

6992. We were given that figure by someone. What I wanted to ask was this: Would not a man naturally go where he will get the best price?—Yes.

6993. And do you blame the farm labourer for doing the same thing?—Not a bit.

6994. Is there any hope of an increased supply of farm labourers whilst the wages are below those paid in other industries?—I think the only consideration should be as to whether the competing employment is equally, shall we say, agreeable. You could not compare a farm labourer with a miner, for instance. That would apply in a lesser degree to other industries, and that ought to be taken into consideration when comparing the two wages; or, as you quite properly put it, the two markets that the man has for his labour. On general principles, if the conditions of employment are equal, then I should say that the worker would naturally and instinctively, as I should myself, select that field for his labour where he could get the most money and work the least number of hours. I am not sure if that quite answers your question.

Mr. Prosser Jones: Yes.

6995. *Mr. Lennard*: In general, would you agree that in dairy farming you need a particularly good type of labourer, as the work is so largely of a responsible kind?—For the looking after your cattle and the management of your horses, undoubtedly you do. You want rather above the ordinary rough and tumble man; but outside of that I do not see that you do.

6996. To secure a good type of men, it is necessary, of course, to make the position of labour attractive?—Yes.

6997. And that is specially necessary in dairy farming, because of the exacting nature of the hours?—Yes.

6998. You are aware, I suppose, that the soldiers during the war have had considerable opportunities of taking part in games and sports in their camps. Would you agree that to make agricultural employment attractive to them it is very necessary that everything possible should be done to make recreation of that kind available for them?—Yes; and it has been done to a very large extent long before the war.

6999. But you have found difficulty with regard to the Saturday half-holiday?—The Saturday half-holiday is, as Mr. Clarkson has said, a new feature, and there is an unwillingness to take on a new feature, and I am afraid that for dairy farm purposes it is impracticable.

7000. You do not think it could be managed at all?—Would you like me to amplify it?

7001. No. It is your opinion. I want to tell you something that is in my mind that I am afraid of, and I would like to know your opinion about it. I have seen a good deal of young men who have served in the ranks, and my impression is that when they are first demobilised their only desire is to get home, and that they are very willing to go back to their old employment and old village life for a time. But I am rather afraid that farmers may be somewhat deceived by that, and not realise the importance of making the conditions specially attractive to retain them on the land. They are ready to come back at first; but I am doubtful whether they will be ready to stop when the first beauty of the return home has rather worn off. Do you think there is much in that?—Yes, I think there is.

7002. *Mr. Nicholls*: What do you think with regard to the future prospect in the case of the man referred to by Mr. Lennard? Do you really think that some of these men have had the impression lately that they can get almost anything they want by going to some other particular industry or some town near by, and that when they discover there are not the same openings for them that they really thought there were, and they discover there is unemployment in the town, and on going to the Exchanges for jobs they cannot get them, they will be more inclined to come back again to the farm?—Yes; it is a passing phase.

7003. Then I want to ask you whether you think it possible, with a view to making the Saturday change possible, to arrange for one man to have his turn off, because really the milking must be done on the Saturday afternoon. We all admit that. Is it possible, do you think, to organise and arrange it so that the man in turn has his time off?—That would be quite easy on a fairly large farm, so that you did not send too many away on each Saturday afternoon. I am not sure that the men would agree to that though; but on a smaller farm where you cannot spare one, the possibility of an arrangement seems rather remote.

7004. Have you found any desire on the part of the men and the farmers to make an arrangement for the former to have their holiday in one stretch instead of having half a day a week?—It has been suggested by the farmers in quite a number of instances.

7005. What about the other side?—This has not been very fully considered, I think, but may be in the future. I am inclined to think that that is a way out of the difficulty.

7006. Do I understand that you are in favour of the fixed prices for milk; I mean for the Government to control it and go on fixing a standard price for it?—Permanently?

7007. Yes?—I think under all the circumstances I should have to answer Yes to the first part of the question, but I am not in favour of Government control.

7008. I was wondering whether after your long experience you had come to the conclusion, with the desire of Governments and Departments to leave labour alone, it would be better to leave everything else alone, and let farmers have the free play of the market, and let the Government take its hands off, and the farmers negotiate with the Unions without any Wages Board or anything else?—That is as to labour you mean?

7009. Yes; the Farmers' Union negotiate with the Workers' Union?—I am inclined to think that, without the intervention of the Wages Board, the two bodies which are now fairly organised in the counties—I am speaking largely with reference to Cheshire now—would be able to manage that business quite well as to wages and hours and conditions of employment.

7010. Would you be prepared in that case to say, "Leave us alone with our labour, and we will take the risks in the market"?—Yes.

7011. *Mr. Smith*: I notice you state in the main part of your evidence when you are referring to better methods of organisation and train service, that it would reduce largely the very serious quantity of sour milk. Have you any idea of the extent to which waste takes place in that respect?—No, we have no statistics; but it is a very heavy charge upon the industry as a whole.

7012. And therefore with this better organisation in reaching markets, great economies could be effected?—Undoubtedly.

7013. Which would help the farmer to meet these increased labour costs?—Yes.

7014. I notice you rather suggest a 58 hour week?—Yes.

7015. Are you convinced that that is really necessary for the well being of the industry?—If you follow that out, it follows, of course, on my first statement of the general principle, and it is the natural conditions controlling the industry that I am referring to. The cows have to be milked twice each day, and you cannot get away from that no matter what arrangements you make. Then in carrying that out, you see

you get intervals even with a 58 hour week of 10 and 14 hours between the milkings, which is rather further than we ought to go in that direction.

7016. Could not the whole system be organised whereby the needs of the farm could be met so far as the times of milking are concerned, and yet reduce the hours?—I am afraid not. I do not see how you could do it. You would want additional labour at your disposal, milkers, and that sort of thing, and the additional milkers are not available. In fact they are not so much available now as they were a few years ago.

7017. Do you know that in other industries when those changes have been suggested, it has been very frequently stated that the new arrangement could not possibly work, but they have found ultimately they could do it by applying their minds to it and finding some way out?—I have no doubt that is so.

7018. Do not you think the same thing might apply here in the course of time; that by some methods of organisation, especially if you got better facilities in transport, all these things could be worked satisfactorily?—I should be delighted if I could see my way to favour such an arrangement, but I cannot at the moment.

7019. You would agree it is desirable to retain as good labour as you can upon the farm?—Yes.

7020. And to do that you want conditions that will be attractive?—Yes, that is so.

7021. In a reply to a question by Mr. Lennard, you said you thought the men might return to the land after their first disappointment with the towns?—Yes.

7022. Is not there a tendency that they might seek to go further and emigrate, after their past experience?—It is possible.

7023. I mean men who have never left their own surroundings view things differently after they have had experience of travel, and possibly they will never return, and therefore it is better to keep them when you have got them?—I quite agree in going as far as possible in that direction.

7024. *Dr. Douglas*: Did I understand you to say that you were in favour of a guarantee for the price of cheese?—Yes.

7025. Would not it be possible to fix anything like an equal value for all cheese?—It would have to be graded.

7026. And that would mean a guaranteed market. A guaranteed price would involve a guaranteed market, would not it?—Yes, I think it would.

7027. That is to say, the Government would need to become the sole purchaser of cheese?—Yes, it looks like it at the moment.

7028. What is the object of that?—I would like to amend that answer. A minimum guarantee would not involve the Government as a purchaser. It would be on exactly the same basis as a minimum guarantee for corn.

7029. Yes; but in giving the minimum guarantee for corn, the Government does not become the purchaser at all. There is no such average price for cheese as there is for wheat, let us say, to serve as a datum line?—Yes, cheese can be imported from a good many quarters of the Globe.

7030. Obviously; but there is no average price of cheese struck, because cheese is of very various values, is it not?—Yes.

7031. Each farm lot of cheese would need to be valued and graded separately, just as cattle are now. is not that so?—Yes, but it would not be a very serious matter. Cheese that are made on farms have a pretty regular quality.

7032. Do you say that even adjoining farms make cheese of similar quality generally?—Not necessarily.

7033. Are not there very great variations in the skill of cheese makers?—Yes.

7034. Would you find that sometimes the difference in value in normal times would be 30 per cent. of the total value of the cheese?—That might be so in a very extreme case, but it would be very exceptional.

7035. So that it would require skilled buying on the part of the Government?—If the Government had to buy, it would certainly.

7036. If the Government guaranteed a price, it would need to buy at that price, would not it?—If it guaranteed a minimum price I suppose it would have to make up the difference if the farmer could not get that price. It would not necessitate the Government buying I think.

7037. If the seller failed to find a purchaser at his price, he would then have a right to go to the Government?—He would be able to sell his cheese at market price.

7038. Yes; but I do not understand what your scheme is. You have, no doubt, thought out how such a scheme would be administered?—No, I could not say I have thought out a scheme. I am simply speaking on the principle.

7039. What would be the ground on which you would advocate this?—The ground that if you give a guarantee for the growing of cereals, there is equal claim on the part of the dairy farmer to have his cheese guaranteed. I see no difference.

7040. You put it as a right of the farmer to have a guarantee?—As a right of the farmer if he is to be kept on his legs in farming.

7041. You put it that it is the farmers' interest that is in your mind?—Not altogether.

7042. But that is what you have said?—Yes; but a farmer's interest in this respect is only leading up to the Nation's interest.

7043. You put it as a matter of equality of treatment between two classes of farmers. You assume that the ground of guarantees is to increase or assure the profits of farmers.—It is to increase production in the first place.

7044. Yes; but when you put it as a matter of justice between farmers, that has nothing to do with production. It is a question of equity between different farmers?—I am quite content to accept that as a matter of equity between one class of farmer and another, because the two classes of farmers are subject to the same sort of outside competition.

7045. You put that forward definitely simply as a protective policy for the dairy farmers?—Yes, but I would not confine myself to that.

7046. And you think the State should undertake an obligation to buy all cheese which may be produced, whatever its value may be, at a minimum price?—I do not think so.

7047. I have difficulty in understanding what you do say?—I say that I have not worked out a scheme. I simply content myself with saying at the moment that the State should guarantee the cheese making farmer a minimum price for his cheese to enable him to compete with outside sources, just as the State is asked to guarantee the corn growing farmer to enable him to compete.

7048. Has anyone ever advocated that the State should guarantee a profit to the corn growing farmer? —I never mentioned profit.

7049. I think you answered one of my questions a few moments ago in that sense. You do not suggest that the corn guarantee has been advocated as providing a profit for farmers?—The corn guarantee, if I understand it aright, is to be given in order that the land can be made and kept productive, and in order that sufficient quantity of corn can be produced in this country, at any rate as near as we can get, to provide for the needs of the population. I do not say for a moment that we can supply the whole of the needs of the population, of course.

7050. And do you say a similar justification to that of the Corn Production Act exists for guaranteeing cheese?—Yes.

7051. Then I will take that as your reply. Is that the same ground on which you advocate the Government control of milk prices?—No, it is not.—I think Government control of milk prices would be on a different footing altogether.

7052. Do you think the control of milk prices by the Government ought to be made permanent?—I would rather it was not.

7053. Do you think it would encourage production to make that control permanent?—I think perhaps it would not.

7054. Do you think producers would like to have their prices permanently fixed by Government Departments?—They would rather be free as producers.

7055. So that they would be more likely to produce, would they not?—That seems to be a natural corollary.

7056. *Mr. Rea*: In the first part of your evidence, you raise the difficulty of following out the milk industry under the new system of hours, and so on. That of course has a tendency to increase the cost of production?—Yes.

7057. And consequently a tendency to lower the profits of the dairy farmers?—Yes.

7058. On the figures that have been put before us this afternoon, those profits do not seem by any means to be exhorbitant, as matters are?—They are difficult to find.

7059. Will there be a danger, do you think, of many men going out of the Industry?—They are going out.

7060. Do you find that in Cheshire now?—Yes.

7061. Throughout the war, have not they been making fair profits on the whole?—Oh, yes.

7062. As other farmers have?—Yes.

7063. That is an agreed fact?—Yes, I think there is no doubt about that, but nothing like the enormous profits they are credited with.

7064. That is the next question I was going to ask you?—But they have been used to working for nothing so long, that the little makes them think they are doing very well.

7065. One hears every now and then, not infrequently, about the enormous profits that farmers have been making during the war. Do you think those profits are anything like what they are represented to be in some quarters?—I know they are not.

7066. You have had a very long experience, and that is why I am putting these questions to you. Do you think that the profits made during the war by the farming community will equal the losses sustained by the farming community during the previous 35 years?—No.

7067. They really have not got their own back?—No.

7068. With regard to transport, have you considered the question generally, or only in relation to the getting of milk to the market?—Chiefly with regard to milk; but I think it applies generally.

7069. Do you think a system of Light Railways or of motor vans would be the best? A little while ago, I think it was the Board of Agriculture, made an enquiry as to the laying down of Light Railways by the side of the existing main roads. Another suggestion was that ordinary light railways should be laid with an independent line. The main road idea would entail narrow gauge which would mean twice trans-shipping the produce between the place of loading and its destination. That would be wasteful. Do you think that is a system you would advocate?—No, I do not think that would be a good system.

7070. Do you think light railways with the ordinary gauge, so that the waggons could be shifted from the line on to the main railway is preferable?—Yes. The main difficulty in the farmer getting his goods and delivering his goods to the purchaser, is the question of trans-shipment, and that particularly applies to smaller quantities of stuff. He not only suffers in delay, but he suffers in very serious damage to his goods. For instance, take the sending of cheese. He does not know his own cheese when they get to the end of the railway journey by the time they have been trans-shipped twice, which happens very frequently now.

7071. What I want to get is your opinion as to the best method of transport. As against the light railways there is the possibility, either under Government management or by some other means, of establishing a service of motor lorries or motor vehicles of some sort to travel along the existing roads. Seeing the damage that would be done to the roads and the cost of repairs necessary, which, in your opinion would be the better system, the light railway system or the motor lorry system?—For practical purposes the lorry system would be far preferable; but it does appear to me that there are serious difficulties in the way of utilising the present roads for lorry traffic, because it does very serious damage to the roads. In order to make the roads so that they would stand the heavy lorry traffic, you would have to treat them in such a way that they are almost useless, and are very dangerous for horse traffic; so it looks as though you would have to select certain roads, and specially construct them for motor traffic for this through service, and reserve the other roads for the sake of the horses. At present accidents are happening frequently on the roads that are made specially suitable for motor vehicles.

7072. It would mean a very heavy cost in bottoming the roads?—I do not think it is so much the bottoming as the surface.

7073. Unless there is a bottom it would go through any surface?—Yes, it is a big undertaking whichever way it is looked at.

7074. My own opinion rather was, that in view of the heavy cost and difficulties of the roads, a light railway system might be better generally?—I would not like to express an opinion on that at the moment.

7075. *Mr. Ashby*: You represent the Cheshire Milk Producers' Association, which is chiefly concerned with the dairy business?—Yes.

7076. And the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture, which is concerned with the general interests of the farming industry?—Yes.

7077. In normal times the chief financial interest of the average farmer in Cheshire was the dairy business, was it not?—Yes, and potatoes. There is quite a fair-sized area in addition to that, where they pursue arable farming and sell all the crops off and cart the manure back again.

7078. Which part of Cheshire is that?—That is Altrincham way.

7079. North-west?—Yes.

7080. Then, except for a district in the north-west of the county, the chief interest is in the live-stock and dairying business?—Yes.

7081. That would have continued to have been the chief interest during the war, would it not, had it not been for the action of the Executive Committee? Do you think that that is still where the interests of the Cheshire farmer lies?—Yes. I think that that is so.

7082. I have just been running through the statistics with which no doubt you are acquainted; and I find, taking the average of the county, in each 100 acres there is roughly about 60 acres of pasture and about 40 acres of arable. Then on each 100 acres there are only about 4 acres of wheat and about 11 acres of oats; about 5 acres of potatoes, 15 acres of clover, and 3 acres of roots, but there are 21 cows and heifers on 100 acres. So that really you have no barley, practically speaking, in the county?—No, we do not grow any barley.

7083. So that what we have heard about the crops which would be affected by a guarantee, applies to about 15 acres of oats and wheat, which is quite a small matter in the total business of the average farmer of the county, is not it?—Yes.

7084. So that you are really concerned chiefly with the price of milk, of store stock, and of potatoes?—Yes, and cheese.

7085. I mean milk products. Then so far as the financial interests of the Cheshire farmer are concerned, who is one of the best farmers in the country on the average, the guarantees do not affect him very seriously?—Not to the same extent as in some other counties.

7086. You recognise that behind the guarantees are two principles, more or less; the principle of securing a national food supply up to a point, and the principle of securing the financial interests of the arable farmer under the Corn Production Act?—Yes.

7087. Can you give any reason why the farmers, as business men, are so frequently concerned with the first principle, the cultivation for defence purposes?—I am sorry to break the rules, but are those statistics old statistics or new statistics?

7088. 1913? The situation has very considerably altered now.

7089. In what proportion?—The arable farming has increased very largely. The corn growing area has increased very largely; but I do not know what the figures are. They are very large.

7090. But you stated just now that that was due entirely to the action of the Executive Committee, and not to any desire on the part of the farmers to cultivate cereals as a business proposition?—Yes, it was due largely to the action of the Executive Committee for national purposes.

7091. And the farmers, as a matter of fact, in pre-war times were studying their financial interests in developing the dairy business?—Yes.

7092. They would have continued to develop that business as their best financial interest during the war, had it not been for the action of the Executive Committee?—I would not say that; I do not think I should say that.

7093. Then you think that Cheshire farmers, on the whole, are willing to grow more cereal crops, even though it may not be to their financial interest?—They are growing more cereal crops, and have been for the last two years. Their one anxiety now is to know whether the continuing of growing those crops is going to be to their financial benefit or not. If not, they will be compelled to go back to their grass farming.

7094. Are you sure about that? Is there not an alternative where you have a highly developed dairy system, as you have in Cheshire, by which you have, as a matter of fact, from pre-war times been growing a considerable acreage of crops for consumption by the cows?—Yes.

7095. Are you sure, if the guarantees under the Corn Production Act are not raised or are withdrawn, that the farmers of Cheshire will let that land revert to grass rather than to maintain it in arable cultivation for the production of food for their cows?—The growing of arable crops for the use of cattle is no doubt a sound business proposition, and I say quite frankly I have thought for a long time that the best method of carrying on a dairy farm where the land is suitable is by increasing the arable and reducing the pasture for purely dairy purposes. I agree with you, therefore, that there would not be that wholesale reversion to grass.

7096. There would not be necessarily a reversion to grass?—No, not on a wholesale scale.

7097. *Mr. Duncan*: I think you said you were in favour of retaining the fixed price for milk. Will you tell us the reason why you are in favour of that?—I have very distinct recollections of the terrific conflicts we used to have periodically with the traders in milk, and I am not sure whether it would not be simpler, after due enquiry as to costings, for the price of milk to be fixed by a well constituted Board to obviate that constant scrimmage between the producers and the purchasers of milk. Sometimes one side gets the better of the other, according to the state of the market, and sometimes the other side does.

7098. Your fear is that if the fixed price is withdrawn the want of organisation in the industry and the competition amongst the producers may bring down the price to a figure at which it will not be remunerative?—Not in the immediate future, but in years to come.

7099. Do you think it is not possible for the farmers themselves to create the amount of organisation necessary to prevent this cutting of price?—I think they have made a start in that direction already by establishing the co-operative societies. In that way they become the marketers of their own produce and supply the market with what milk is required as milk and the rest they manufacture into cheese.

7100. You do not think that will be sufficient in itself?—If it was widely enough developed I think perhaps it would be sufficient.

7101. Do you think there is any reason for having the interests of the consumer consulted in the matter of the fixing of price? Do you think that is a matter which ought not to be entirely in the hands of the producer?—Quite.

7102. Was there any difficulty in securing labour on the dairy farms in Cheshire before the war?—No, I do not know that there was any serious difficulty.

7103. These are all difficulties which have arisen recently?—There was always a general sort of difficulty because of the competing industries, which at that time could always afford to pay a good deal more money to the man and give him his week-end off than the farmer could possibly afford to pay.

7104. Do you think that the present difficulty is due to the complete upsetting of all our affairs through the war conditions or is it a growing feeling amongst the workers themselves on the farms that they ought to have conditions approximating to the conditions which obtain in other industries?—I think it is very largely due to the upset through the war.

7105. Was there no movement prior to the war for shorter hours and more leisure in Cheshire?—Nothing very definite.

7106. I seem to remember that there was a good deal of agitation in Cheshire prior to the outbreak of war—that the workers had an organisation of their own in that county which afterwards became a part of the Workers' Union?—I do not think there was anything that was worth mentioning. My recollection does not serve me at all in calling it to mind.

7107. These hours that are now fixed are not hours fixed by Statute. There has been no interference with your working hours by any statutory body?—They are minimum hours fixed by the Wages Board—but what does that involve? I beg your pardon for asking a question again.

7108. The only hours fixed are hours upon which the minimum rate is to be calculated. There is no statutory limitation of the number of hours that may be worked by any workman or the hours which any employer may work his workmen?—So that really the argument in favour of longer hours in order to secure the men at their employment during what we may call the necessary operations, in view of what you say, rather falls to the ground?

7109. My point is this, that the farmers and the workmen in a district are quite free to fix any hours that they please. All the Wages Board does is to say that if a certain number of hours are worked a certain rate of wages must be paid, but there is no limitation that you must work a six and a half hour day or that you must work less than seven days. You can work the whole of the 24 hours if you please, so far as the law is concerned, provided you pay the minimum rate of wages. That is the position, is it not?—I am afraid that that has not been thoroughly understood. The pronouncements of the Wages Board have rather given the impression that those were the hours which were to be worked for an ordinary week's work.

7110. Surely the farmers of Cheshire are capable of arranging their business on something better than an impression?—They can arrange their business if it is left to them to do it.

7111. It is left to them is it not?—I am very glad to hear you say so.

7112. Surely it is amazing if the agricultural industry in Cheshire proceeds to alter its hours without any compulsion being placed upon it under the impression that it is compelled to alter the hours. I put it to you that the farmers are still as free to-day as they have been at any period of their lives to fix the number of working hours with their workmen.

7113. *Chairman*: That is a statement of fact. Whether the witness agrees to it or not is another matter?—I accept it as a statement of fact.

7114. *Mr. Duncan*: I wanted to bring that out, that the working hours you have fixed in your district have been fixed between the workmen and the employers and that the demand for the shorter hours has come from the workmen?—Yes.

7115. Has any effort been made to get workers to carry over this period from Saturday afternoon to Sunday? I suppose the main difficulty is to get milkers?—Yes.

7116. If you could get milkers to carry over that period, what you may call the regular work of the farm would not be so difficult to meet?—No.

7117. Have you any system in Cheshire of occasional milkers, that is to say, milkers who are not regularly employed on the farm coming in occasionally to milk?—No, except in a few instances.

7118. There is no occasional labour of that kind employed on the farm at all?—Very little.

7119. If I put it to you that practically the whole of the milk industry in Scotland is conducted on that basis with occasional milkers who come in and do nothing else but milking is there not a possibility of getting some elasticity in that direction in your county by training your milkers who would be available for a turn occasionally to relieve the regular workers? Would not that meet the difficulty of pro-

viding shorter hours in the milk industry?—We have milkers who are regularly employed.

7120. For milking only?—Yes, but we have no surplus; no reserve to fall back upon; that is the difficulty.

7121. What is the reason that there is no reserve to fall back upon? What rate has usually been paid in the past for that work?—The lowest wage I paid in 1914 for milkers was I think 4s. 6d. a week. I am not defending it mind you, I am simply stating what was the fact, and it was in harmony with the terms of their employment. I believe I paid rather more than most people did.

7122. I quite agree.—Now it ranges from 8s. up to 14s.

7123. How many cows do they milk at a milking?—7 or 8.

7124. How often a day do they milk?—Twice.

7125. You are paying now from 8s. to 14s.?—Yes.

7126. Has that not produced more workers who are willing to milk?—No, rather less now than ever.

7127. Where were these milkers drawn from?—They were largely the workmen's wives.

7128. You do not find that the increase of the wage has had any effect in creating more workers willing to undertake the work?—The increase of the workmen's wage generally has rather defeated that object; their wives do not come out as freely to milk now as they used to do.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

NINTH DAY.

TUESDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 1919.

PRESENT:

SIR WILLIAM BARCLAY PEAT (*Chairman*).

SIR WILLIAM JAMES ASHLEY.
DR. C. M. DOUGLAS, C.B.
MR. G. G. REA, C.B.E.
MR. W. ANKER SIMMONS, C.B.E.
MR. HENRY OVERMAN, O.B.E.
MR. A. W. ASHBY.
MR. A. BATCHELOR.
MR. H. S. CAUTLEY, K.C., M.P.
MR. GEORGE DALLAS.
MR. J. F. DUNCAN.
MR. W. EDWARDS.
MR. F. E. GREEN.
MR. J. M. HENDERSON.
MR. T. HENDERSON.
MR. T. PROSSER JONES.
MR. E. W. LANGFORD.
MR. R. V. LENNARD.
MR. GEORGE NICHOLLS.
MR. E. H. PARKER.
MR. R. R. ROBBINS.
MR. W. R. SMITH, M.P.

Mr. R. COLTON FOX, representing the Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs, called and examined.

7129. *Chairman*: You have submitted to the Commission a statement of the evidence you propose to give, and also certain schedules of income and expenditure for the years 1916, 1917 and 1918, and balance sheets for the same years, and statements of costs of wheat, oats and barley.‡ Will you allow me to incorporate those in the day's proceedings without reading them through?—Yes.

Evidence-in-chief handed in by witness.

Cost of Production.

7130. (1) Since I did not enter this farm until April, 1915, I have no balance sheet to show for a pre-war season, and as the land was not worked up to a normal level until the end of 1918, I have taken the 1919 harvest as a guide to expenses and yield.

All crops, except late sown barley, have been seriously affected by the drought.

(4):—

7131. (2) Owing to the practice of fallowing being practically non-existent in this district, my actual expenses for the wheat crop are less than in other localities.

To the actual cost of working must be added a percentage for profit and risk, and this I have taken at 20 per cent.

Horsemen's wages have been calculated from September 15th last year to 18th August, 1919; the result is 37 weeks at 41s. and 12 weeks at 47s., giving a weekly average of 42s.

7132. (3) As the cost of production will be still further increased for 1920 harvest, since the wage is now 47s. and food for horses has gone up, it is evident that the present guaranteed prices will be as inadequate for next season as they are for this year on land affected by drought.

Oats should be no less than 60s., barley 80s., and wheat 90s.; for though such prices may appear high where a full yield is obtained, they are necessary when crops have failed after every effort has been made.

Crop.	Actual cost per acre.	Add 20 per cent.	Probable yield.	Value per acre.	Profit.	Loss.
Wheat—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
5½ acres	10 17 11	2 3 –	4 qrs.	†15 2 ..	2 1 1	—
Wheat—						
29 acres	10 17 11	2 3 –	3 qrs.	11 6 6	—	1 14 5
Oats—						
*26½ acres	12 2 9	2 8 –	3 qrs.	7 2 6	—	7 8 3
Oats—						
13 acres	10 18 9	2 3 –	5 qrs.	11 16 6	—	1 5 3
Barley—						
6 acres	10 4 10	2 – –	2½ qrs.	8 12 2	—	3 12 8
Barley—						
5 acres	10 4 10	2 – –	3 qrs.	10 6 7	—	1 18 3
Barley—						
14½ acres	10 4 10	2 – –	4 qrs.	13 15 6	1 0 8	—

These estimates refer to the harvest now being reaped.

‡ *See* Appendix No. II. * Ploughed by order, 1918. † Figures corrected in course of evidence.

Remuneration of Labour.

7133. (5) The industry differs from any other by reason of our inability to pass on to the consumer the added cost of production, since the price of our produce is normally ruled by the world's market. It is therefore clear that if in two years' time the world price of cereals so falls that the British farmer finds his wages bill exceeding his corn receipts, his position will become intolerable, the home-grown food supply will shrink at least one-half, and the workers will be driven to unemployment, the towns or the colonies.

If the present high scale of wages maintains it will not be feasible to bolster up agriculture either by a tariff or a subsidy; the former remedy can never be sufficiently high, while I consider the latter so invidious that its existence would only be short.

The solution seems to lie in the basing of wages on the current corn prices, and doubtless such a method has already been suggested. By this system agriculture would more nearly approach other industries, in that the consumer would have to bear his share of the cost of production, and labour would be prevented from unreasonably demanding periodically increased wages. For regular workmen the harvest wage might be abolished, being replaced by equitable prices for piece-work, thus stimulating increased activity at an anxious time and producing in the worker a feeling that he has a personal interest in the harvest.

Hours of Labour.

7134. (6) Previous to the existence of the Wages Board, our men labourers worked from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. six days a week, resulting in a 54 hours' week; considering the time spent in going to and from their work, and also the many days lost through wet weather, these hours were not excessive. In the winter of 1914 horses were four weeks idle at a stretch, and the time lost had to be made up. Agriculture work does not prematurely age a man, nor does it entail the strain produced in the steel and mining industries. I am not in favour of the Saturday half-holiday, because a farmer is never on top of his work, and, though he may offer his men work during those hours, it has been my experience that some of them prefer to lounge in the town, which is good neither for their pockets nor their health. The proposal to abolish the "customary" hours for horsemen is absolutely unworkable.

Firstly, it would be unfair to charge overtime rates for labour which is essential to the working of a farm; secondly, the employer would be harassed by additional supervision of his men and the booking of hours actually spent in overtime; and, thirdly, it would destroy the interest of the attendant for his stock, since some men object to overtime if they can earn enough without it. I am, therefore, in favour of 54 hours per week, stock attendants to receive a fixed additional remuneration.

(*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*)

Chairman: Then I will ask Mr. Edwards to begin the questions.

7135. *Mr. Edwards*: You are a farmer yourself, are you not?—Yes.

7136. What is the acreage of your farm?—285 acres.

7137. You say in paragraph 2 of your precis, that fallowing is not practised in your district?—That is so; but I have an estimate for what I used to fallow on my previous farm, and I based that estimate on the usual routine for prices next year for an acre of wheat. I forgot to send that up, and perhaps I ought to have done so. I have worked that out on the fallowing.

7138. Then fallowing was practised in the district where you farmed previously?—Yes, it was.

7139. And it is not in this district?—No.

7140. In view of the fact that fallowing naturally increases the cost of the corn crop, do you think that fallowing is necessary in any part of the country?—Yes, I do, for some things. There are certain lands that you cannot get right for autumn sowing the same year that you take your crop, the previous crop, off. In the strong lands in Yorkshire, and I know the Trent Valley in Nottinghamshire, the custom is very usual for wheat.

7141. But do you think it is not possible to cultivate the land with some previous crop, in order to do away with a year's waste as it were?—I should certainly favour a green crop and eat off; and plough in what they do not eat, like mustard. I do not believe in having bare fallow if you can possibly avoid it.

7142. Is it possible to avoid it? We have some hundreds of acres in this country with a bare fallow?—Personally I always try to.

7143. And you think even in the district where it is followed now, it is practicable?—In a favourable year it is.

7144. Throughout your memorandum you seem to suggest that the average prices should cover, not only the play of the market and the importation of corn, but even the bad seasons. I should like to have that further developed. It is very interesting as I am a farmer myself?—I think the question is very hard to answer because we stand so much risk, in a bad season like this season where you get hardly your expenses back. Now if the play of the market does not cover your risk, farming is no good. You cannot guarantee that your yield is going to be a certain amount, and however hard you try it is possible that the season will ruin you. If the price of your produce cannot cover that risk, there is no incentive to farm.

7145. Yes: but you recognise, I presume, that this is an entirely new principle in our farming. We have so far in this country farmed without a guarantee as to the play of the markets or the season?—Yes, we have; and we have stood some bad years on that. Personally, as I say in my statement, I do not believe in fixing a price.

7146. But you do believe in a guaranteed price even against the play of the market and also the bad seasons?—If the idea is to guarantee the price, I say the price should be so guaranteed to cover the risk; but it is a procedure that I do not favour. I say that the wages should be based on the current prices of corn.

7147. And do away with all guarantees?—Do away with all guarantees.

7148. Do you think that wages is the only item in farming that should be regulated according to the price of the stuff we grow?—It depends whether the prices for our commodities which we use are going to keep at the present level.

7149. What about the rents; would you agree that the rents should also be made to slide according to the price of the produce?—No, because I think the present rents are generally fair.

7150. Assuming now the prices will go down, according to your argument you would be in favour of the wages sliding down?—Yes, because our industry is different from anything else. I take it the price of food will be the first thing to drop, before the price of steel or anything else.

7151. But what about the rents? Would not you favour the rents dropping down on a similar scale?—I cannot say that I would.

7152. Why differentiate between the wages and the rents?—Because it is the interest on the landlord's capital.

7153. It is the interest on the workman's capital too. His only capital is his labour?—Yes, that is so. I quite see your point; but that is a hard thing to answer.

7154. *Mr. Duncan*: Which Riding of Yorkshire is your farm in?—The East Riding.

7155. Have you thought out any scheme for relating wages to prices?—No, I have not; because, to tell you the truth, I have not had the time to do it, and I am not sufficiently clever.

7156. *Mr. Cautley*: Which part of East Riding is your farm in?—It is 4 miles from Malton, and 16 miles from York.

7157. It is Wold land, is it?—Some of it is, and some of it is clay land.

7158. How far from Driffield is it?—I cannot tell you quite, but about 10 miles.

7159. Driffield is the centre of the Wolds?—Yes, it is.

7160. There is a great fear in that country that a great part of the land will have to go back to sheep runs, is there not?—Yes.

7161. Is that due to the increased cost of everything that a farmer has to buy and pay for in the shape of wages, farming implements, feeding stuffs, and everything?—Yes.

7162. Should I be right in saying that unless some relief is given to the farmers, a great part of the land in this Wold district of the East Riding of Yorkshire will go back?—Yes.

7163. Really to grass, and practically a sheep walk?—You see it is not suitable for feeding, even if it went down to grass again, for cattle; but it will be sheep runs.

7164. Simply sheep runs?—Yes.

7165. You have suggested that wages should be based on the current prices of corn. We have tried that in the past, have we not? Up to the time of the Corn Production Act, wages have been fixed by the law of supply and demand as between the farmer and the man?—Yes.

7166. But would not you agree with me that that system has not been satisfactory so far as agriculture is concerned?—No, it was not satisfactory to the man, but it was the best the farmer could do.

7167. Exactly. Was this the fact: that he was subjected to free imports, and had the market for his produce fixed by the world prices, on which his produce had no influence?—Yes.

7168. Was the result of that that the workman's wages were driven down to a bare starvation point?—Yes.

7169. You do not want to go back to that, do you?—No, I do not. But my meaning is this, that if you are going to favour agriculture at what the public think an undue amount, it will not do us any good.

7170. That is true; but let us look at the interests of agriculture for a moment. If you are satisfied, as I gather you are, and you agree with me that the old system has failed, what reason is there to believe that it will succeed now?—My idea has always been—it is not worth very much—that I do not think you will make this country a corn-growing country. I have always favoured a system of elevators; and if the climate will stand it, I think it would be cheaper in the long run to store our supply of corn if it can be done.

7171. That is going rather from the point, if I may say so. There is one question I ought to have asked you at the beginning. Are you giving evidence here solely on your own behalf, or on behalf of any Agricultural Society or Association?—I am in this position. Our Secretary rang me up a fortnight ago to-day, and asked me to appear. As I am working 14 hours a day, I refused it. Then he wrote to me and said that the Yorkshire Farmers' Union of Clubs had not a single member who apparently had the courage to come here; and when he put it like that I said, "Well, I have no evidence, and nobody to give me any figures at all." I have had to work this week to try and get something out. I met the Committee last week at York, and they asked me to represent them if I could.

7172. Who do you mean by "our secretary"?—Mr. Soulby, at Malton.

7173. I know the gentleman, but not the name of the body he is secretary of?—The Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs, not the Farmers' Union. There are 29 clubs in our body.

7174. So you have come here at their request?—Yes.

7175. But I gather from what you say, that the figures you put forward are your own figures?—Yes.

7176. Having got so far that the late system of fixing wages by the law of supply and demand has not been satisfactory, does not that necessarily imply that we are to have a change?—Yes, I agree with you.

7177. Can you suggest whether the reason for the change is, that you believe or anticipate that farmers will not be able to carry on their industry with these increased prices of labour and the articles they have to buy?—From my estimate of growing wheat next year, I say that unless a farmer can grow 5 or 6 quarters to the acre he is farming at a loss.

7178. And is 5 to 6 quarters an acre an impossible average in your district?—I should say that the average of the district will be 4 to 4½.

7179. *Mr. Edwards*: Is it wheat or oats, or what? Taking it all round.

7180. *Mr. Cautley*: I am speaking of wheat?—I would say on a small holding of 30 acres last year, they threshed 7 quarters an acre on 6 acres.

7181. I am speaking of the average?—4 to 4½ quarters.

7182. If something is to be done to enable the farmer to carry on his industry at a profit—and it would not be carried on except under those conditions—have you any suggestion to make to this Commission as to what ought to be done?—The only thing is to fix prices.

7183. Either to fix prices or to give a guarantee?—Yes; a tariff is impossible; it would not help us.

7184. Can you suggest anything better than a guaranteed minimum?—No, I am afraid I cannot.

7185. Can you tell us what the views of your Farmers' Club is?—Of course, if there is anything at all, they say it will have to be a guarantee, but they do not know what.

7186. Have they considered how much it should be?—No; they have not told me anything.

7187. Or on what footing it should be arranged?—No; they have no idea at all.

7188. Have you considered as to whether it is possible it should be on a sliding scale?—No. You see the sliding scale would be the same all over the country. It would have to keep the same, unless you could yearly arrive at the cost.

7189. Have you considered this difficulty; that the wages as now administered by the Wages Boards can be changed at a month's notice, or practically about say two or three months, perhaps?—Yes.

7190. You are aware also, are not you, that the prices of feeding stuffs, machinery, and whatever the farmer has to buy, vary from day to day?—Yes.

7191. Do you agree with the general view that has been expressed here, that what a farmer desires more than anything is to have a definite policy arranged for, say, 5 to 8 years?—Yes; we passed that resolution in our club, in favour of five years, and we were laughed at.

7192. You understand, do you not, that any guarantee would mean, if it is to be effective, that the country will have to pay at some time or other?—Yes.

7193. And that that comes on to the taxpayer?—That is so; I recognise that.

7194. Cannot you see the great difficulty in arriving at a guarantee for a number of years when all the other elements of cost are fluctuating from day to day, or at any rate at intervals of 2 months' time?—Yes; I think if it was definitely stated that the price would be fixed, even if it varied every year, so that farmers could farm at a profit, even if you never stated the exact guarantee, it would give us some encouragement; but I quite realise that the guarantee in 2 years' time might be excessive if you fixed it now.

7195. In addition to the other fluctuating circumstances that I have mentioned, you would agree also it is quite impossible to foresee what the world prices are likely to be, say, 2 years hence?—That is so.

7196. Can you help us at all in suggesting any way of arriving at a sliding scale by which the guarantee would diminish as the general amount of farmers' expenses diminished?—You see, it depends largely on the costs of labour. That is our main fact.

7197. I will come to that.

7198. And fertilisers?—I am talking simply about corn. I am not talking of feeding stock. In our part of Yorkshire we look upon feeding stock as a side line. If we can make ends meet by buying and selling and feeding bullocks, the cost of manure, of course, goes to the land, and feeding stuffs are not so important—not for corn growing.

7199. What I understand you to say is that the main elements in the cost of corn growing in your part of the East Riding are labour and fertilisers?—Yes.

7200. Can you suggest any way by which the guarantee could vary with the price of wages? An offhand opinion is no use to us; but have either you or your Farmers' Club considered that at all?—They

have done nothing about that at all. It has to be fixed on the world prices; and if this Commission finds out what it costs per acre in England, and compares the present prices; if the world prices dropped you would have to keep ours in ratio to theirs.

7201. You see, the world prices to-day, judging by the import price we are paying, which is something like 100s. a quarter for wheat, puts that out of the question. The guaranteed price bears no relation whatever to that to-day?—No.

7202. In the future, if the world prices drop very substantially, can you suggest how the guarantee is to be fixed? Suppose, for instance, in a year's time the price of foreign corn was to go down below 45s., and coupled with that there is the fact that under the Corn Production Act as it stands to-day the only guarantee for the farmer next year is 45s. a quarter for wheat, what is the position of the Malton farmer?—He cannot do it.

7203. It means bankruptcy to him, does it?—Yes, he would give it up.

7204. Then there must be a guarantee above 45s.?—There must.

7205. Can you at all help us as to how the amount of that guarantee should be arrived at, so as to vary with the cost of labour, say?—The guarantee for next year I suggested should be 90s.

7206. I am going to ask you one or two questions on that? It is based on the fertilisers and labour as to-day.

7207. Before coming to the particular figures, I have one or two questions to ask about that. Can you suggest at all from what you know of the views of the farmers in your part of the East Riding of Yorkshire, whether it would be possible to have a guarantee varying with the rate of wages, say?—If it varied it would mean that wages would drop.

7208. Not necessarily. If wages go up, according to your evidence, the guarantee would have to go up, too?—Yes; if wages go up, the guarantee would have to go up.

7209. But can you arrive at any proportion of the cost of wheat growing, between labour and the actual cost of the finished article? That is what it comes to. Does it vary in any constant ratio at all?—No. You see, taking the average of last year at 42s. a week and the present one of 47s., it is 5s. a week more. It only affects the different operations to a very small extent; but it would make 5s. an acre difference for ploughing.

7210. But you cannot tell us how much a quarter that would work out to?—No; at present it does not make much difference. If you go over the present level of 5s. a week, it does not affect the quarter so much.

7211. If you have not considered it, say so. I think it would; because labour enters into every process employed, from the ploughing at the very beginning to the application of the dung, and right away to the carting of the wheat to the station. It comes in every item?—Yes, it does; but it depends upon how much a week it goes up. You see we have gone up £1 in 12 months.

7212. You were asked one or two questions about the rent. As a matter of fact, has the rent varied at all in the last 4 or 5 years?—The rent has not varied, or not with me, at all.

7213. Has it been prevented by the very Act of Parliament I have mentioned from being increased?—There has been no increase at all.

7214. So that the rent does not vary?—No.

7215. Coming to the actual details, are these figures that you put before us taken from your own books?—Yes.

7216. Are they actual costs—not estimated costs?—Which figures are you referring to?

7217. I have only one set: Wheat, 5½ acres, and actual cost per acre, £10 17s. 11d.? They are actual operations, and the actual cost at to-day's prices of labour.

7218. For what year? The harvest, 1919.

7219. Taking the first item of wheat, 5½ acres, £10 17s. 11d., do I understand that that is wheat grown after some other crop? Yes; it is wheat after oats.

7220. So that there is only one ploughing there?—That is all.

7221. Do you tell us that one ploughing is enough on the average to grow wheat in your county?—It is, unless you are taking it on a dirty old stubble. We usually follow wheat after oats.

7222. What is your rotation?—Roots, barley, seeds, then oats, and then wheat.

7223. I thought the wheat came first? Is not the oats often a dirty stubble?—It depends whether it has been two or three crops.

7224. And you grow the wheat on that?—If it is dirty we have to work it about the best we can and burn the wicks in the autumn.

7225. It is light land, and you can get the wicks out?—Yes.

7226. You tell us that you can grow wheat with once ploughing on the average?—Yes.

7227. And even in spite of that advantage, you tell us the average cost of growing wheat is 90s. a quarter?—Of course, I did not know whether I was to take a survey of the whole of the country as well as our own district.

7228. No. I understand you are speaking of your own district about Malton?—Of course in my own district the 90s. would seem rather high.

7229. That is what I want to get at. Is the 90s. for your own farm or your own district?—I should say that on my own figures 90s. was too high.

7230. Do you mean too high for your own farm, or too high for your district?—Too high for my own farm.

7231. Then why did you tell us that 90s. was the amount you thought the guarantee should be put at?—Because I was not thinking of just my own farm.

7232. You were thinking of other parts of the country?—I was thinking of the whole country.

7233. Where the ability to grow wheat is worse than in your part. Is that it?—That is so; in Essex, for instance.

7234. We shall have other witnesses about that. Will you deal with your own county, please. What is the cost of growing wheat, so far as you can tell us, in your own district?—If I can grow four quarters an acre, it will come to somewhere about 90s. allowing for reasonable profit; and we allow generally 20 per cent. for risk and profit.

7235. I was going to ask you about the 20 per cent. in a moment; but I will ask you now and come back to the other question. You put down 20 per cent. Does the 20 per cent. include your interest on your capital?—Yes.

7236. Does it include the farmer's or the proprietor's time for superintendence?—No, it cannot cover that.

7237. Where is that in your estimate for growing wheat?—I have not allowed for that.

7238. You have not allowed anything for the farmer's own time?—No.

7239. If he was not there, he would have to employ a manager, who would have to be paid a salary, would he not?—Yes.

7240. You allow nothing for that?—No.

7241. But you have told me that 20 per cent. does include the interest on the farmer's capital?—Yes.

7242. What else is included in that—the risk of a bad crop?—It includes the general risk. I mean he may not get back what he spends, so that you have to allow certain things.

7243. That is included in that?—Yes.

7244. And his profits?—Yes.

7245. What do you estimate it costs to stock a farm in the Malton district? What capital have you to have in the farm?—£15 an acre at the least.

7246. I suppose it has to be more?—It was £10 before the war.

7247. I should agree with that, if I may say so?—And I should say now it would be in some cases as high as £20.

7248. But £15 would be the very lowest?—Yes.

7249. The interest on that would come to 15s. to £1 at 5 per cent. That is in the 20 per cent.?—Yes.

7250. Can you tell us the cost of once ploughing an acre?—I met the farmers on Thursday at York; and, to tell you the truth they said I had got it too low.

7251. You have not told us what you have got it at?—Yes, it is in the figures.

7252. I have not seen your estimate, so I will not go into that.

7253. *Mr. Dallas*: You said in reply to Mr. Duncan that you had no scheme for this sliding scale of wages. Have you got no idea that the wages would stick at any particular level? Do you want them to slide down to nothing, or do you want to draw a line; and if you want to draw a line, where would you draw the line as to what the rock bottom minimum wage would be?—I should say it would cause us less trouble if wages remained where they were, and you arrived at the guarantee now; and whatever guarantee you fixed now on present wages, let it remain.

7254. But that is a contradiction of the evidence you have submitted to the Commission. Your evidence to the Commission is that your idea is not what you have just said, that wages should remain stationary; but rather that they should be based on a sliding scale and rise and fall with the prices of agricultural produce?—Yes. I said that was impossible, because the price of corn might go down so much that our men's wages might go down to what they were before.

7255. That is what I want to get at. Have you got any, what I might call living wage in your mind, that wages should not go below?—If things would remain as they are, it would be far the best to continue this present wage.

7256. That is not the point; but I will leave it?—Unless the other scheme was impossible.

7257. You mean to say you have submitted a scheme, which after consideration you think is impossible?—It did not strike me so. The world prices would drop so much that our men could not live.

7258. Why did not you put this into operation yourself? In 1916-17, prices were very high just before the Corn Production Act was put into operation. I think they were about 80s.?—Yes.

7259. The general costs of farming then were very much lower than they are now?—Yes.

7260. Why did not you give your labourers the advantage of the magnificent sliding scale?—Personally I was in a very poor position. I changed my farm in 1915; and as you will see from my balance sheet, unfortunately I lost money, and it did not occur to me that it should be done.

7261. And now since you put it forward, you say it should not be done?—Now, I say the men can have £3 a week for all I care if corn prices allow it.

7262. You said in answer to a question from Mr. Cautley that the guaranteed price should be 90s. You thought that was probably too much for yourself for your own district, but you thought for the heavy clays of Essex it would be the right price?—Yes.

7263. Would you be surprised to know that the leading representative of the farming community in Essex has been here, and stated that 60s. would be quite enough?—It depends on his operations per acre.

7264. I am telling you that he has been here and said that 60s. would be quite a sufficient guarantee. What is the object of your suggesting 90s. when it is not a figure that you think suitable for your own district, but you put it forward for another district, and the people from that district think it is 50 per cent. too much?—Because if I may quote you these figures, for growing a wheat crop in 1920 on fallow, it comes to £17 an acre.

7265. I will leave it like that; but I want you to think over what I have told you. Do you think that if the Government subsidises farming—and you have agreed it would be the taxpayer who would have to pay—that the other industries would be content to help to pay out of their pockets to keep agriculture in a prosperous condition, without also asking the Government to subsidise them as well?—No, I do not.

7266. Then if the Government subsidised them as well, it means that the farmers would have to be paying some of their money to help to keep them going?—Yes.

7267. So that we are in a kind of circle: that the farmer gets money from the other fellows to keep him going, and he pays it out to keep the other men going?—Yes.

7268. *Mr. Ashby*: You said in answer to Mr. Cautley that your average yield of wheat was 4 to 4½ quarters?—Yes.

7269. Could you give us the normal average yield of barley for your district also?—I should place it at 4 quarters.

7270. And your oats?—5 quarters.

7271. Could you tell me what is the proportion respectively of profit and of risk in this second column in your table?—I add 20 per cent.

7272. You add 20 per cent. to your total cost; but what part of that 20 per cent. do you think represents risk?—You see I have taken rent and rates at £1 9s. 9d. an acre. That is included in my schedule of costs*.

7273. Will you tell me what are the risks?—Failure of crops.

7274. I take it on this land of yours your chief risk is drought?—Yes; drought is the main risk.

7275. And this summer has been pretty bad for you?—Very bad.

7276. So that the yields you quote in this third column for this year, are pretty nearly your bottom yields?—Yes.

7277. So that as a matter of fact you make two allowances in this table for risk. You take your yields at your bottom point, and then you add 20 per cent. to your costs for risks. Do you think that is fair?—No; the yields that I quote are different for two lots of barley: one at 3 and one at 4.

7278. But may I say that I have worked out your average yeild over the whole acreage; and for wheat it is 25½ bushels; for oats it is 29½ bushels, and for barley it is 26½ bushels. So that in each case the yield you state is considerably below your normal or average for your district, and to that extent you have allowed for the risk in this year; then you add something for risk. Do you think that is quite a fair proceeding?—I see.

7279. So that if we ruled out the element of risk and said that these figures of £2 3s., £2 8s., etc., cover profit and do not really cover risk, because you have allowed for risk in this year, you do, except in the case of one piece of oats and one piece of barley, show small profits rather than loss?—I was taking the actual yield, you see.

7280. I know you were taking the actual yield; but you are allowing something for risk which is not really run this year, because you have taken the yield, as you admit yourself, at the bottom point?—Have I taken the actual interest on my money? Is that what you mean?

7281. If these costs are actual costs and then you add 20 per cent., which varies from £2 to £2 8s. an acre with these yields which you admit are the bottom yields, that £2 is what you think ought to be profit which is not quite reached in all cases?—I see what you mean. I have stated definitely the yield I expect, and I ought only to have taken the farmer's supervision and the interest on his money in this case?

7282. In this particular case. I understood you to say, in answer to Mr. Cautley, that these figures in the first column are actual cost records?—Yes.

7283. Do you obtain them by recording periodically the number of horse days and the number of men days on each crop?—Yes; of course it is based on my estimate of ploughing per acre.

7284. There are one or two points in your balance sheet. In the statement of profit and loss account at the 1st April, 1916, your valuation is £1,108, roughly; but I understand that this does not include stocks of hay, corn, cake and manure?—No manure that is made in the yard, do you mean?

7285. Look at your own note. There is a considerable increase in the valuation between the beginning and the end of 1916. Could you tell us to what that is due?—It was partly due to the amount of fertilisers that I had in hand; and it was due also, I think, to my having 25 quarters of oats.

7286. It is partly due to increase in stock and manures?—It is partly due to increase in stock and manures.

7287. And also partly due to increase in live-stock?—Yes.

* *See* Appendix No. II.

7288. Is that the case in the following year? In that year the valuation is falling?—The last year.

7289. Do you do your valuing yourself?—Yes, I do.

7290. How do you treat the live-stock; do you keep them the conventional value or the market price?—In breeding cows I have, that I have no intention of selling. If I have a mare I have had three or four years that cost me £50, I do not put her this year at £50, but I put her at £80, unless I have no intention of selling her.

7291. You do keep them as a rule well under market value?—Yes; but not my stock that I am going to sell.

7292. That is the stock you expect to sell in a short time?—Yes; I put it at as high a value as I can.

7293. *Mr. Batchelor*: How many acres of arable land have you?—I have it varied now. In 1915, 1916, and 1917 I had 167 of grass and 118 of arable. In 1918 and 1919 I had 150 of arable and 135 of grass.

7294. Do you ever grow any potatoes on your farm?—No.

7295. Do you breed horses?—A few; not more than two or three foals a year.

7296. Do you deal in horses—buy and sell them?—No; not more than I can help.

7297. Will you look at your income and expenditure statements*. In 1916 you purchased horses to the extent of £291 18s. 5d. How many horses did you buy?—I only did it buying young ones, working them and selling them.

7298. That is just what I am asking?—I simply had to do it. I had some horses go lame, and I had to replace them.

7299. That same year you sold horses to the value of £217 10s.?—Yes; those were three or four young blood horses. I sold altogether that spring six or seven.

7300. Then the next year year, 1917, you bought horses to the extent of £171 13s., and sold horses to the extent of £322 7s.?—Yes. I sold two harness horses together at Nottingham at £50 apiece—four-year-olds.

7301. Then in 1918 you purchased horses to the extent of £305 5s. 9d., and you sold horses to the extent of £631 1s. 6d.?—I assure you I do not deal in them.

7302. It is only a 285 acre farm. There is surely more changing of horses there than is necessary?—Without my books I cannot tell you; but I assure you it has chiefly been young ones.

7303. Then look at your expenditure statement*. In 1916 you have an item of purchase of corn, £252 13s. 4d. What kind of corn was that?—The mistake lies in this: it is only "Crops." My ledger is so arranged that all I spend in the way of fertilisers comes under the system of crops; because I put it like this, that I can see what I have actually spent on my crops to grow them, and that is why it is down like that.

7304. So that it really includes the item of manures?—It is the fertilisers.

7305. Then to deal with fertilisers: in your estimates or statements of costs of growing wheat, oats and barley, I see no fertilisers at all?—I put down fertilisers £2 0s. 9d.

7306. You put them under the heading of "Tillage"?—Yes.

7307. In your statements of the cost of wheat you have ploughing, £1 3s. Is that for an acre?—Yes; 18s. 6d. a day for a man and a pair of horses.

7308. Is the man about 7s.?—Yes. To be fair to this harvest, I had to take so many weeks at 41s. and so many weeks at 47s.

7309. You take an average of 42s. Is that for 6 days?—Yes; that is ploughing for this harvest.

7310. But 42s. is 7s. a day for 6 days for a man?—Yes.

7311. How much does that leave for the horses—11s. 6d.?—Yes; that is a pair of horses.

7312. Is that sufficient for two horses?—According to my estimate, it is; but on the Wolds where they give them two stone of oats a day—I only give mine 1½—of course their average is slightly higher.

7313. But you think that 11s. 6d. is sufficient to cover the cost of a pair of horses with you for one day?—Without the harness.

7314. Do you allow in that for the days during a year when the horses are not working?—They told me on Thursday at York that instead of taking the weekly cost of a pair of horses and a man and dividing by 6, I should divide by 4; and I said that if I came here and said we only worked 4 days a week, there was not a man who would believe me. But I certainly think the cost is not high enough if you allow for that.

7315. Do your horses work more than 4 days per week, which is roughly 208 working days in each working year?—No. I have had my horses 6 weeks without working in the winter.

7316. That would put up the expense?—I have not allowed for that.

7317. In your expenditure statement*, you have in the year 1916 "Sundries, £344 2s. 5d."?—In my other balance sheet I put down what my sundries were, because the Income Tax Surveyor wished to know in that year. But that was the year when I changed my farm, and I put down certain things in my sundry column that wanted to be explained.

7318. It must be the cost of valuations; it cannot be repairs?—I could let you know the exact amount. It is perfectly fair; but it ought not to be under sundries.

7319. Are you the owner of your farm?—Yes.

7320. Under the expenditure item, you have rent in 1916 at £292 2s., whereas in 1917 it is £312?—My accountant does all my Income Tax, and he got the wrong amount under Schedule A. It was not high enough, because when the property was sold nobody knew what property I actually owned. The Income Tax people did not know. It was all sold in 1915.

7321. Then insurances, is there any reason why the insurances should come down in 1917 as compared with 1916?—Yes; it is mares in foal.

7322. Then is there any reason why the rates and taxes should come down so much in 1917 as compared with 1916?—Unless I have included in that a portion of the actual Income Tax that I paid. I can give you my rates if you like.

7323. Yes; what are they?—My rates are £58, and my tithe is £54.

7324. *Mr. Overman*: Mr. Batchelor has taken you through the cost of the ploughing, which you have admitted is very low indeed—too low. Are all these items of harrowing and drilling taken on the same basis of 18s. 6d. per day?—Yes.

7325. You graze some cattle, do you not?—Yes.

7326. What do you do with the manure?—I put it where it ought to go.

7327. Do you put it on for wheat?—It just depends. My land has been so funny that I cannot tell you what I should do. but usually I try and give 8 to 10 loads an acre on oats stubble for wheat, and I try to give the same for turnips, so that it gets it twice in four years.

7328. Where do you charge it here?—This actual wheat did not receive any.

7329. Did the oats receive any?—It was ploughed up grass.

7330. Did the roots receive any? There is no charge at all made in these accounts for farmyard manure?—No; and this is what my brother farmers told me: that in the case of barley, when I had allowed nothing for the cultivation of the root crop, they said that some proportion of that cultivation and the manure ought to come down to barley. I asked them what proportion, and they could not give it to me; they could only suggest £2 an acre.

7331. If you charge nothing for the manure on the wheat, surely you could charge for the labour which put it on there?—Yes; but in my estimates there was no manure to be allowed for.

7332. Is not it a common practice to put your farmyard manure on for wheat?—There is none of that done in our grassland.

7333. You do it for oats then?—We do it on our own wheat crop, but not on the grassland.

7334. What I want to lead up to is, that this cost per acre is an estimate of the usual cost of wheat in your country, is it not?—I cannot say that it is, because I was asked to take the cost of the present harvest.

* *See* Appendix No. II.

7335. And you never applied any farmyard manure?—No, not to this particular wheat.

7336. With regard to your charge for thatching at 1s. 6d. per acre, do you use string for thatching?—Yes.

7337. And straw, I suppose?—Yes.

7338. There is no charge for that?—I charge for thatching.

7339. Does that include the string and the straw?—It includes everything.

7340. Do you think you can thatch for labour alone at 1s. 6d. an acre?—Of course, I ought to have allowed for the thatch band, I know.

7341. Then you do things very much cheaper in Yorkshire than we do in other counties.

7342. *Mr. Anker Simmons*: Do I understand that you are not in favour of a guarantee?—The only objection I had to that was, our position with the rest of the country. It would not find favour.

7343. Do you think it would find favour if we adopted such a suggestion as you made: that the guarantee should be as high as 90s. a quarter?—Do you mean with the public?

7344. Yes?—No.

7345. Do you think it would be advisable in the interests of agriculture that the guarantee should be fixed at a sum which would include a profit to the farmer?—You mean guarantee a profit?

7346. If you guarantee a profit, what about the loss?—There should be no profit.

7347. There should be no profit on the guarantee?—Do you mean if the expense becomes less?

7348. I will put it in another way. Do you think the guarantee should be higher than what we estimate is the average cost of wheat production?—Yes.

7349. Do you mean, taking the country through, it would be possible to grow wheat to-day at £11 an acre?—Do you mean the average for the whole country?

7350. Yes?—I should say that that is absolutely the minimum that you can grow it at.

7351. You give evidence that it costs you in round figures £11 an acre to grow wheat, and you suggest a guarantee of 90s. If we adopted your figures, that would mean on a 4 quarter crop a profit to the farmer of £7 per acre, plus the value of the straw. Do you seriously suggest that that would be a wise course for us to recommend?—No, not in my particular case, as I answered one gentleman. The price in my own particular case seems very high. I quite agree with that.

7352. When in paragraph 3 of your chief evidence (§7132) you speak of the present guaranteed prices, do you mean the prevailing prices, or the prices alluded to in the Corn Production Act?—I mean the prices of the guaranteed minimum.

7353. The present guaranteed minimum is last year's maximum?—Yes.

7354. And you say that that would not be sufficient to encourage farmers to grow cereals?—Yes; it cannot be. Where I am perhaps doing wrong, as one gentleman told me, is that all along in farming I have considered the whole country, and as I have shewn here, it costs £17 an acre on fallow. I am considering that man as well as myself.

7355. But assuming it does cost £17 an acre on fallow, you would not argue that it would be fair for us to take the cost of growing wheat on fallow as the fair average cost of growing the general crop of wheat?—No. Then he must alter his methods.

7356. But no man would grow the whole of his wheat after bare fallow, would he?—No; it would not pay.

7357. I mean in ordinary general practice, it would not do?—No.

7358. So that you could not fix a guarantee on the basis of what it would cost you to grow wheat after fallow?—No, you could not. You would have to take the average of the highest and the lowest.

7359. Have you yourself any fear that the world's prices are likely to depreciate materially within the next three or four years?—Yes, I have.

7360. You are aware that the present price of oats and barley is very far above the guarantee?—Yes.

7361. Would you hesitate to plant cereals in face of the present position with the present guarantee?—No; because I think that the prices will keep up for next year unless a maximum is fixed.

7362. Do the items that you have given us include the whole of the crops of cereals that you grew, or are they selected specimens?—Which ones?

7363. In the estimate of the cost of production of your wheat and oats?—In the schedule it gives every acre of corn I have on the place.

7364. Notwithstanding the probable yield that you quote, you would agree that the average yield of wheat in your neighbourhood would be between 4 and 4½ quarters, and in the case of barley 4 quarters?—I would take the average for wheat at 4 this year.

7365. And barley 4?—Yes, and barley 4.

7366. I do not want this year. I mean the average of years?—I say the average for wheat would be 4¼. I said 4 to 4½, I think.

7367. That is taking an average over three or five years?—Mind you, I am just on the edge of the wheat growing country. In the Wolds, as you know, they do not grow any; but we are near the people who grow wheat, and I should say the average for a year would be 4 to 4½ quarters for wheat.

7368. You would not suggest, would you, that, generally speaking, wheat is grown after one ploughing?—It is in our part, because we plough and press; very often we simply plough and press.

7369. Have many of the farms in your neighbourhood been sold?—Yes. Estates have been bought as a whole and then offered again.

7370. Roughly, what was the value of the rent pre-war in your neighbourhood?—Farms vary from 25s. up to 38s.

7371. Can you tell me what was the rent of your farm before you bought it?—Twenty-five shillings an acre.

7372. And if you put the purchase money at 5 per cent., what would be the rent to-day?—I am afraid I cannot tell you offhand.

7373. Roughly, how much per acre did your farm cost you?—It cost me £25 an acre.

7374. So that would leave your rent very near to what it was before?—Yes.

7375. What was the tithe on it?—£54. It has gone up.

7376. So that, as a matter of fact, rents have materially increased in cases where men have bought land which they now occupy?—That is so.

7377. *Mr. Rea*: With regard to guarantees, you consider that the guaranteed prices should be sufficient to leave the farmer a profit do not you?—Yes.

7378. But do you think that that is the view the taxpayers of the country would take of it?—I think they should be guaranteed against a reasonable loss.

7379. That is another point. You say they should be guaranteed a price which would leave them a profit?—I mean that if a man has an average crop you should base your figures on his costs of production, so that if all goes well he would have a reasonable profit.

7380. Yes; but before there was any question of guaranteed prices, farmers had to stand the racket of the markets, and some years they had to stand a loss. Do you think it is fair to the country that all element of uncertainty should be eliminated?—Yes, I do, because the country would simply be paying us for growing a safe supply of corn. Before the war it did not matter, I take it; but the idea of this Commission is to promote the growing of corn, and therefore that loss must be eliminated, as far as possible.

7381. That is quite clear from the farmer's point of view, but you have to look at it from the taxpayer's point of view also. Do not you consider it would be sufficient if there were such a guarantee as would prevent the farmers suffering a heavy loss?—In a normal condition, I do.

7382. In the nineties, when wheat dropped to £1 a quarter, any crop was suffering a very heavy loss. Do not you think it would be sufficient if there were a guarantee of, say, 60s. as a minimum, which would give the farmers a safeguard against a loss such as that?—Yes. Of course, the guarantee could not prevent any serious loss by reason of the seasons. I mean the farmer would take that and would not

grumble. But the guarantee should cover his working expenses, and leave him a profit if the season is favourable.

7383. Do you think that a guarantee of 60s. as a minimum, with the prospect of making higher prices when the markets were favourable, would be sufficient to induce the farmers to carry on cultivation?—For wheat?

7384. Yes?—Yes. I think if all went well that ought to compensate him, provided that the expenses do not go up.

7385. Of course, if the expenses went up that figure might have to be reconsidered?—Yes; that is taking the whole country. On my schedule of expenses I should be satisfied if I could get my average crop.

7386. If you had that as a guarantee and took your chance of the markets to make your profit?—But you see for that 60s. you could not base that on 4 quarters to the acre. That would not pay you.

7387. That is my point. I am not arguing that he should be paid every year, but that he should be guaranteed against a severe slump?—That guarantee would be sufficient for next year, because the play of the market would allow him to make more than 60s. But I do not say that in two years from now that guarantee of 60s. would be sufficient, because the play of the market would not allow him to make more than 60s., and 60s. alone, with no prospect of an increase. By making it a guaranteed minimum and a maximum, it would not pay him.

7388. But if the world's market price fell consistently below 50s., that would mean that the cost of living was reduced, and all other costs would be proportionately reduced?—My point is this, that although the cost of living as regards food might drop, will the general price of wages that produce our raw materials drop and allow us to buy things cheaper? Food prices may drop, but the wages may not in the towns.

7389. On the other hand, of course, they may, if living is cheaper?—I hope they may.

7390. You suggested that there should be a sliding scale as between the cost of produce and the rate of wages. Was that so? Did not you suggest the cost of produce should regulate the wages? Yes: I wish it could be done.

7391. Have you thought of any basis on which that could be done?—No. I have not. I think it was done in the slate quarries. It was fixed every three years, and it worked perfectly well.

7392. You think that would be a means of giving confidence to farmers, if such a scheme could be carried out?—It would save a lot of trouble.

7393. *Dr. Douglas*: I see in your statement* about the cost and returns of your crops, you do not allow anything for straw?—No.

7394. Why is that?—I suppose I should have done.

7395. That would make a substantial difference, would not it?—That really comes into the question of feeding cattle.

7396. But you do not suggest that straw is of no value?—We do not sell any straw, you see. And some of us have been feeding bullocks rather at a loss.

7397. I do not suppose you sell all your oats either, do you?—I wish I had told you how much I had used, but I never thought to bring it. I know exactly how many oats in each year I sold. I have it down here.

7398. But you credit yourself with all the oats you grow, whether you sell them or consume them, but do not credit the crop with any straw?—I do not sell any straw.

7399. Is not it a mistake not to put some value on the straw?—I ought to put some value on.

7400. Do not you think so yourself? At all events, you do not put anything in for it. Take your second and fifth columns. Are not you first claiming a profit in one column and claiming it again in the other?—You have allowed for a profit of £2 3s., and then you put down £2 1s. 1d. Does not that altogether make a profit of £4 4s.?—Yes. I have found that out. I was in a hurry. They wired me to send it next day.

7401. You recognise you have counted something twice over there?—I quite realise that second profit should have been simply as regards the guaranteed price. You see what I mean—the difference between my profit and the guaranteed price.

7402. I think there is more than that, is not there? You have put yourself down as having made a loss in certain cases when, if you take into account your 20 per cent., you would have actually made a profit. Is not that so?—On the oats?

7403. Yes?—The calculation on that price was very heavy.

7404. I am dealing with the figures as you give them. I put it to you, after you have charged the profit in the second column, you deal with the profit in another column, and that is an entire confusion?—You mean I have taken the 20 per cent. and then I have taken the profit of £2 1s. 1d.?

7405. Yes; and you make yourself out to have lost, whereas, in point of fact, you had a profit?—My intention was, but I have not done it, to show my actual receipts taking the 20 per cent. on my expenditure and then showing the difference between that and what I should get on the guaranteed price, and I put it wrong.

7406. You make a suggestion that wages should be based on the price of corn. Do you think that would be an acceptable proposal?—I think it would avoid friction.

7407. But do you think the suggestion would be accepted by the workers?—I think surely it would, because the men know perfectly well what we are doing now.

7408. Have you ever put it to them?—No, I have not

7409. You are merely guessing when you say they will accept it?—That is a suggestion that I shall bring up at the next Local Conference.

7410. *Sir William Ashley*: Do you consume produce off your farm?—Yes, I consume the keep for the horses.

7411. Have you allowed anything for that in these accounts*?—No, I have not allowed for that. I have taken each acre as if I was selling all the produce. I have taken down my five quarters of oats as though I was selling every bit, and of course I have consumed that at home. Still, I have counted that in as my actual receipts.

7412. Does any of your household consumption appear in these figures?—I allow for that in my balance sheet, for produce consumed in the house. It is something about £70. It is all in my accounts. There is so much butter, milk, cream, bacon, potatoes, and chickens.

7413. *Mr. Smith*: Do we understand that these figures apply to this area that you have given in your précis of evidence?—My cost per acre?

7414. Yes?—Yes.

7415. And are the costs actual figures?—Yes, the cost of actual operations.

7416. The others are estimates?—No, the actual costs based on my estimates per acre for ploughing.

7417. But the probable yield is an estimate?—It is an estimate, but I think it is correct.

7418. How long is it since you have made the estimate?—The estimate was made partly when I started cutting, and also a fortnight before when I walked round with the Government Inspector.

7419. What is your reason for suggesting a guarantee for corn?—I have pointed out before that, personally, I am against a guarantee; but it must be done to give us confidence.

7420. Do you think that is the general opinion of farmers?—I do. It has been expressed at two Clubs to which I belong.

7421. Have they not any confidence in the future?—They have no confidence.

7422. Did I understand you to say that you were urged to come here because there was a difficulty in getting other farmers to come?—Yes, for this reason. None of them had any balance sheet to produce at all. They none of them had any figures as to what corn they had sold this last year; and they are all of them men who are good in their line, but uneducated in book-keeping.

7423. Have not these questions been discussed by farmers?—Not at meetings.

7424. Would not you think that if they were so doubtful as to the future they would discuss these things amongst themselves?—Yes; but the only thing I know is that we passed these Resolutions asking for a definite programme for five years.

7425. Would it be true to say they have been doing so well that they are not seriously concerned?—I know they have been doing well. Do you mean the profits?

7426. Yes?—In the first year of the war—which do you mean?

7427. During the past five years?—Yes, they have made that up. They have paid their over-drafts off at the bank and had a fresh start. They expressed to me the opinion that what they have made in paying off the over-drafts they do not want to lose in the years to come.

7428. But you rather suggest indifference on their part; and I was wondering whether that indifference is merely evidence that their position is satisfactory?—No; because I told them it was not what they had made in the past three years or until the Corn Production Act, but it was the future, and that none of them could arrive at an estimate. I have had six different estimates for ploughing.

7429. But is the industry carried on in such a way that it is impossible to see what the ploughing cost actually is?—You see each man has his different way, and they arrive at different estimates; and, as I say, they all differ.

7430. But is it necessary to have an estimate? Cannot you get at the actual cost?—No. You see the costs of one farm would be either greater or less on the next farm?

7431. Yes; but they would be actual figures, and not estimates, would not they?—Yes, if you could arrive at them. It is not like an industry in a town. Each man perhaps uses less or more artificials than another, and he perhaps works his land better.

7432. If you have a 12-acre field, you would know how many hours it took for a team of horses and a man to plough that field?—Of course some men would give it an extra ploughing, and the next man would not. This is one quartering 18s. an acre, and another man might pay 18s. an acre more than that man.

7433. If you go over twice, of course it would cost you more?—It just depends on how they work it.

7434. Have there been any sales of land your way?—There have been several estates sold, but very few individual farms have been sold round me. In two cases the estates have changed hands as a whole and failed to find purchasers when offered in lots.

7435. Have any farmers bought their own farms?—No, very few; in fact I do not think, except myself, there is one farmer round me who has bought his own farm since I have been there.

7436. Is it possible through your Farmers' Club to get any actual returns of farming?—I could not do it.

7437. Do you not think, if this guarantee is to be given which you yourself have suggested of as much as 90s. for wheat, the public will want some definite evidence, or information, before they would consent to it?—You see, there again my 90s. is based on the most expensive measures, but in some ways satisfactory measures, for growing wheat. 90s. would honestly be too much for me, I know.

7438. But you realise, do you not, that if the public are to be asked to contribute towards the cost of wheat, they will want to know the reason?—Yes.

7439. And in the absence of definite figures as to results on farms, it will be rather difficult to give reasons, will not it?—I should take it with my average that 20 per cent., say £12 10s. an acre, is what you should get. Take that on four quarters, and I should say that wheat for the next two years should be 70s. I say that in my district that would probably be possible.

7440. What do you base that on—an average yield?—I take it on an average yield of 4 qrs.

7441. I understood you to say that the yield was 4 to 4½ qrs.?—Yes, for wheat. Ours is such a funny district for wheat, that you cannot really say that the crop is 4½ to the acre. It makes all the difference in our district. It is 4 to 4½; but I should say 4 is the true average.

7442. 70s. would give you a return of £14, would not it?—Yes.

7443. And I understood you to say that the cost of producing was £11?—No. My system was only one ploughing and put straight in as you have it, which is the cheapest way round me. But even with me the general average is dearer than this, because this is absolutely the cheapest way of putting it in, and I have taken that to be perfectly fair.

7444. But, as a body, the farmers in your district are not putting forth suggestions for the future?—I understand a member of the Farmers' Union was going to attend here; but ours is different to the Farmers' Union. It is the Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs, and I am sorry to say I am the only one to represent that body; but I understand the Farmers' Union from Yorkshire is coming here.

7445. How many members are there in your Association?—There are 29 clubs.

7446. And the members of those clubs are so much concerned about the future of the industry that there is only you prepared to come forward and give us evidence?—They practically forced me to come.

7447. *Mr. Smith*: That does not suggest a very serious position, so far as they are concerned.

7448-9. *Mr. Robbins*: If the Government were to say to the farmers of your district: "We are not going to interfere in future. We are not concerned with what proportion of your land you use for tillage. We are not concerned with the proportion you use for grass farming," would they still think they were entitled to a guarantee?—No; because it means that the country does not mind what happens, and therefore they will farm to suit themselves on the cheap.

7450. *Mr. Parker*: I am not quite clear at present whether you maintain that the guarantee given should cover interest and risk?—Yes.

7451. You do maintain that?—I maintain it.

7452. When you put your figures at 60s., that is to cover interest and risk?—Yes, I have added 20 per cent.

7453. And you maintain that?—Yes, I think it should be.

7454. I gather from your conversation that you think the question of hours of labour very serious. Have you considered this question a more vital element in the cost of production than the minimum wage?—The labour?

7455. Yes?—I consider it the most vital question.

7456. And if the question of hours should be settled up satisfactorily. . . .?—Yes, we are more concerned about that than anything else.

7457. You are more concerned with the hours than the minimum wage?—Yes.

7458. Would it, in your opinion, help farmers if the Agricultural Wages Board fixed wages for a year certain, instead of the rate of wages being liable to be varied after a month's notice?—Yes, I do. I think that they should be fixed for a definite period of six months, or a year.

7459. It would help matters if there were certainty for a year?—I think so; we should know what the future is.

7460. I want to ask you a question about your idea of basing wages on current corn prices. Why do you confine this suggestion to corn prices? Why should not it apply to meat, and milk as well?—I do not quite know how to work it. I have no suggestion as to arriving at the ratio of wages to corn prices. It is what I think the most just method of doing it.

7461. Have you considered at all how any sliding scale could be framed? Is not the difficulty to find a standard or base on which to start? I mean if you were arranging a sliding scale now, what figure would you take upon which the scale was to slide?—I should start by taking the present minimum price, at least its maximum as well, of wheat; and I should take the men's wages for the week as they are at present. I should start on the present.

7462. Would you take the present minimum wage, and would you say the present prices are sufficient to cover that minimum wage?—You see, the present prices for wheat are 75s. 6d. 75s. 6d. for me would just make me all right; and therefore I should start at present and take the weekly wages, the percen-

tage on a quarter of corn, and if the Commission is satisfied that that is all right, I should then base the future on that.

7463. *Mr. Nicholls*: I want to ask you one question about this wheat field, called the Cube Field*. Did I understand that your farm, when you took it in 1915, was very rough?—Yes, very. Of course this particular Cube field was ploughed up last year for oats.

7464. Is your wheat after oats?—Yes, it is. It is on the strongest land, you must remember, because the light harrows cannot touch it.

7465. You light harrow it twice after dragging?—Yes.

7466. How many horses do you use on the drill?—Two. There are two men with the drill, one to drive and one to see to it.

7467. How many acres, on an average, would they do in a day drilling?—We generally allow an average of 10.

7468. And then you harrow twice, after drilling?—Yes.

7469. That is a custom, too?—Yes, that is a custom.

7470. What is this tillage referred to that costs £2 11s. 3d.?—The proportion of my total tillage superphosphates, £201 15s. 7d.

7471. I was not quite sure of that. Did not you say that you had a small holder neighbour of yours?—Yes.

7472. And he grew 7 qrs. on one of his fields?—Yes.

7473. Do you know whether it would be his custom to drag-harrow and twice harrow before drilling, and twice harrow after drilling; or would it apply to your land being very bad and in a bad state?—I must confess his land is kept like a garden, and he might omit the drag-harrowing; but I think, in fact I am certain, he would twice harrow before drilling, and he would probably twice harrow after, but not the drag-harrow.

7474. You are not sure?—No.

7475. I mean a man's field which is in a good state, would not really take the same labour and trouble as yours that was in a bad state?—No; he would probably omit the drag-harrowing, and only harrow once after the drill.

7476. And he got better results than you would hope to get, because his land was in a better state?—Yes.

7477. One question about the labourers. Do you put forward the suggestion that the labourer should work longer hours because farming is a catchy business; it is sometimes wet and they lose time, and because these men engaged in an industry that is really essential to the nation and are unfortunate enough to be in it, they ought to work longer hours and ought to bear all the burden of this catchy weather; that is, penalise them because it rains?—You see, I am allowing for the time spent in going to and from his work. I am also allowing that the energy used per hour in our business is less than in any other industry.

7478. Did I understand you that you farm is 4 miles from the place of delivery?—Yes, four miles from Malton.

7479. So that all your cartage is a 4 mile trip?—Yes, up and down hill.

7480. That, of course, adds to the cost per acre?—Yes.

7481. *Mr. Lennard*: In the section of your evidence-in-chief headed "Remuneration of labour," you draw some distinctions between agriculture and other industries, and you appear to think that agriculture stands by itself in having the price of its produce normally ruled by the world's markets. I suppose you often find American machinery used on farms?—We cannot use such machinery.

7482. But it is matter of common knowledge, is not it, that American machinery is to a great extent used on farms in this country?—Do you mean tractors?

7483. Yes, and binders?—Yes, we use tractors.

7484. Has it never struck you that the engineering industry of this country is subject to foreign competition, and that its prices are largely ruled by the world's markets?—They are.

7485. I suppose in your own county in the West Riding, which is my native district, you know there are many carpet factories?—Yes; but I am hardly a West Riding man; I am an East Riding man.

7486. If the Yorkshire carpet manufacturer were to raise his prices very much, would not the people buy more Turkish and Indian carpets?—If we raised our prices for the home article, it would mean that the foreign article would receive a better market.

7487. Would you agree generally that if we went through the whole catalogue of British industries, we should find many more besides the instances I have quoted in which foreign competition has seriously to be reckoned with?—Yes.

7488. So agriculture does not really differ from every other industry in this respect, but other industries are also subject to foreign competition?—Yes; but my point was meant to be, that where we differ essentially is that we cannot of ourselves pass on our expenses to the consumer.

7489. I suggest to you neither can the carpet manufacturer do so, because if he tries to pass on a large increase in his expenses, the consumer will buy Indian carpets instead, will he not?—Yes; but you see, if I may just say so, before the war the wages were based on supply and demand for carpets. Now they are not. They are based on the fixed wages.

7490. That is rather a different point, is it not?—Yes, it is.

7491. You suggest in your evidence that a sliding scale between agricultural wages and corn prices should be established, and you say: "By this system, agriculture would more nearly approach other industries." Is it the rule to find such a sliding scale between wages and selling prices in other industries?—No; but you see, by fixing the price in regard to the wages, it means that we get certain of our labour expenses back. It means that in the price you fix, you are taking into consideration the labour expenses, and that will fall on the consumer. But as things are going to be, apparently we have no guarantee that our expenses will be refunded.

7492. Neither have other industries have they?—Yes because they put up the cost of a pair of boots, and we do not.

7493. Not if people buy foreign goods themselves?—Those foreign goods are dumped; but if I go in the market and ask 40s. for cereals and the market price is 35s. and it costs me 36s. or 37s., I cannot get the 36s. or 37s.

7494. I quite agree; but I think other people are in the same boat in that respect?—Then they should not be.

7495. You say in another part of your evidence, that it would be unfair to charge overtime rates for labour which is essential to the working of a farm?—Yes.

7496. Would you regard the Sunday work of railway signalmen as essential to the working of the railways? Surely you would?—Knowing, as I do, intimately, because I do it myself, the amount of work required on Sunday for stock, I do not consider that the 2 or 2½ hours spent the whole of a Sunday on a stock farm can be compared with a signal box; the two industries are so totally different.

7497. But your point was, that it was unfair to call it overtime, when it was an essential part of the normal working of a farm?—It is.

7498. I put it to you that the work of the railway signalman on the Sunday is an essential part of the normal working of the railways?—Yes, it is, but, there again the same men will not take Sunday duty every Sunday. It is possible, with the amount of railway staff, to work it in shifts.

7499. Yes; but my point is that he is paid a definite overtime Sunday rate, is he not?—Before the war I used to pay 2s. for Sunday duty, and I paid 18s. to £1 a week before the war. The men used to take it in turn for Sunday duty; and I am perfectly willing to pay so much for Sunday duty, but not by the hour. Have 2s. or 2s. 6d. for Sunday duty, but do not say so many hours.

7500. I notice that you advocate a 54 hours' week for agricultural labour?—Yes.

7501. Are you aware that at a Meeting of the Reading Branch of the National Farmers' Union last Saturday, a Resolution was approved urging that after November 1st, next, a week of 50 hours all the year round to be universally adopted?—No, I did not know that.

* *See* Appendix No. II.

7502. That Resolution indicates that your views about a 54 hours' week are not universally shared by the farming community?—I think in our part last week they told me—or when I said I was going to say 54 hours, every farmer (and there were 20 of them on the Committee) agreed with me.

7503. You spoke just now of the rate of wages being fixed for a year. If wages were fixed for a year, do not you think that employment of the man should be guaranteed for a year also?—In our part, on the Wolds, that is done. The men are hired for a year from next Martinmas.

7504. You know that that is not common in other parts of the country?—It is, on the Yorkshire Wolds. I myself have men on a fortnight's notice in my own cottages; but unless they create a disturbance, they are there for as many years as they like.

7505. But if wages were fixed for a year, would you think it fair that employment should be guaranteed for a year?—Hardly, because it would allow the workmen too much liberty.

7506. In your Table, paragraph (4) of your evidence-in-chief, you have reckoned 20 per cent. on cost as going to the farmer in addition, as profit and compensation for risks, and only entered in your profit column anything which the farmer gets over and above that 20 per cent?—It has been pointed out to me that the 20 per cent. over and above the actual cost, ought to be sufficient.

7507. Then what the farmer would actually receive, would be the difference between your cost column and your value column?—Yes.

7508. I have been through these figures, and I think there is a misprint at the top of the value column where you have £15 0s. 2d. instead of £15 2s., which is four times 75s. 6d.?—It may be myself. I will not blame the copy.

7509. Making that correction, I have added up the return over and above the cost of production on all the fields except that field of oats which was ploughed by order, and which, I think, you will agree was an exceptional case. The result shows, does it not, that the farmer of the 73 acres would get at the existing guaranteed prices a total return of £1 4s. 4½d. an acre?—Yes.

7510. Now, I want to take you just a step further. All these calculations so far have been based on the existing guaranteed prices?—Yes.

7511. And those are minimum prices?—The wheat is also the maximum.

7512. At least as regards oats and barley they are minimum prices?—Yes.

7513. Oats and barley are the only crops on which you do not show some profit on every field?—Yes, except that which was ploughed by order.

7514. And there is one other which is a barley field?—Yes, it is 3 quarters.

7515. Take that barley field. At 86s. 7d. a quarter, which was the average price of British barley last week, those six acres of barley which yielded only 2¾ quarters an acre, and are a loss on your figures, would be worth £10 16s. 5d. an acre, and would show a profit of 11s. 7½d. an acre?—Yes.

7516. You would agree with me, I expect, that this has been an exceptionally dry season?—It has.

7517. The drought, you say, has seriously affected the yield?—Yes.

7518. But you would not seriously suggest that the Government ought to fix guaranteed prices which would give you a profit on every crop in every field in an exceptionally bad season?—No. I pointed out to a gentleman over here that the exceptional loss in an exceptional season is part of the gamble, and I think we would stand it; but the idea is that, taking a normal season and a normal yield, the profit should be guaranteed over our expenses. A year like this we are accustomed to; we do not mind.

7519. You speak of loss; but I think I have shown that, on your own figures, taking the market price instead of the guaranteed price, there is no loss except on the one field of 26½ acres of oats which was ploughed by order?—Yes, I quite see that. There is 10s. even on the bad piece of barley.

7520. And, moreover, in all these figures we have made no allowance for the value of the straw?—No.

7521. So that has to be counted in if we are to get the real financial result?—Yes, it should be.

7522. *Mr. Langford*: You do not belong to the National Farmers' Union, do you?—No, I do not.

7523. You belong to the Farmers' Club?—Yes.

7524. How many members have you?—I do not know, but I should say a few thousand.

7525. Are you aware there are approximately 3,000 members of the National Farmers' Union in Yorkshire?—They are increasing the membership in Yorkshire.

7526. And you would not know how many witnesses are coming from the National Farmers' Union?—No, I do not.

7527. You would not be surprised to learn that a few are coming?—No, I am very glad to hear it.

7528. I propose to ask you a question and not go into detail; but among your farming operations in 1916 you made a loss of £357 17s. 6d.*?—Yes.

7529. In 1917 you made a profit of £66 2s. 6d., and in 1918 you made a profit of £382 15s. 5d.?—Yes.

7530. If you add those three years together it works out to a profit of £91 0s. 5d., or an average of the three years of £30 6s. 9d. That is a very small profit, is not it?—Forgive my correcting you, but when I was last in York I went to see the accountant about settling up for Income Tax, and I understood him to say that the average for those years was £160, I think.

7531. I am taking the figures as presented by you in your accounts?—These were got out by my accountant.

7532. You admit this is an abnormally bad year on account of the drought?—I admit it is a very small profit.

7533. Then you do not expect to make a profit this year on your own figures?—On my figures here I have given you the yields, and I think those yields are correct.

7534. On those yields at present market prices, you do not expect to make a profit this year?—Except on the 26 acres.

7535. So that over a four years' average your profits will be extraordinarily small?—Very small.

7536. I think you have been too modest; but you said you were the only intelligent member of your Association who would come and give evidence?—Because, if I may say so, you gentlemen are rather more brainy than farmers from our part.

7537. I put it to you that if you cannot make a profit, many of your neighbours farming in a smaller way would be unlikely to make a better profit?—But some of my neighbours have 3 or 4 sons, and have not a single hired man.

7538. It would be fair and reasonable that those sons working on the farm should be credited with a reasonable wage?—That is so.

7539. And after paying a reasonable wage to the sons they would not be able to make a profit equal to yours?—But those sons have no limit to the hours they work.

7540. Mr. Cautley put a question to you, and you said that rents had not increased in your district?—No.

7541. Your rent has not increased?—Except as regards the increase of tithe.

7542. Mr. Cautley put it to you that rents had not varied in consequence of an Act of Parliament, and you agreed to that?—Yes.

7543. Do you agree to that now?—To the existing tenant the rents have not gone up.

7544. You are speaking of your own particular county?—Yes.

7545. Would you be surprised to learn that in most counties in England rents have gone up considerably?—Yes, I should be surprised—to the existing tenant, if I may say so?

7546. Exactly. I want to read an extract from a letter which conveys a different impression, and which ought to be cleared up. This is the letter: "Dear Sir, Upon the death of the Hon. Lady (Blank), the late owner of the (Blank) Estate, Sir Thomas (Blank), the new owner, has to pay to the Government, under Act of Parliament, a heavy tax known as an Estate Duty. This tax is based on the selling value of the property. You will doubtless agree that as Sir Thomas (Blank) will be called upon to pay this heavy duty based upon the selling value as estimated by

* *See* Appendix No. II.

the Government Department and not on that which he actually receives, an increase of the rents of the various holdings in accordance with the Government valuation is both fair and reasonable. We have therefore to inform you that after the 11th November next, 1919, your rent will be raised to (blank) pounds a year. We shall be glad to hear from you that you agree to pay this amount in future." Then a subsequent letter bearing on the same point reads as follows: "Referring to our letter to you of the 18th ultimo, in which we informed you that the Government valuation of your farm was based on a rental value of £240 a year, and saying that we must ask you in future to pay that rent from November 11th, we have no wish to hurry you in coming to a decision, but we have just received an offer to take your farm at the increased rental should you wish to give it up. The applicant, who is anxious to take a good farm in your district, would like to hear of one as soon as possible. We should be glad, therefore, if you would let us hear from you within the next week or so." That indicates that rents are being raised in other counties if not in yours?—I should like to say this, that our landlords are some of the best in the country, and they do not make a practice of raising the rents of existing tenants.

7547. So that when you said the rents were not raised, you intended it only to apply to your particular district?—Yes. I cannot tell you of the whole of England, because I know nothing about it.

7548. Would you be surprised to know that on this letter which I have read, a small holding was raised actually 200 per cent. in rental?—Well, I should screw the landlord's neck.

7549. From say £50 to £150; and another small holding previously rented at £54 12s. was raised to £100; and another small holding has been raised 30 per cent. If those facts are true that I have related, then the Act of Parliament does not prevent the raising of rent?—It is supposed to.

7550. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: You told Mr. Langford that you had one of the best landlords in the country?—Yes.

7551. And you told us you had made very little profit during the last couple of years?—Yes.

7552. Is it not likely that if you had been making large profits your landlord would also come along and ask for a little more rent. Would not that be natural?—Of course I farm my own land.

7553. But would not a man charge more rent against these accounts even if he had been paid well on the farm. If you could have shown a good balance sheet, is not it likely that you would have increased the rent against your balance sheet?—No, I would not have increased the rent of any man; in the past rents were forgiven altogether. My neighbour, Lord Midleton, forgave the whole rent for one year.

7554. From your evidence in your précis, one would be led to believe that you take a very gloomy view of the future as far as agriculture is concerned. Is that so?—Yes—the uncertainty.

7555. What number of men do you employ on this farm of 300 acres?—I employ 4 regular men.

7556. What is the minimum wage in your district?—41s. for labourers, and 47s. for horsemen.

7557. Do you pay anything beyond that?—No, nothing beyond that.

7558. So that you are compelled to pay that?—We are all compelled to pay that.

7559. Do you find the efficiency of your men equal to what it was, say before war time?—I do not find the efficiency the same. Do you mean the standard of work?

7560. Yes?—No. I do not. I consider it has dropped.

7561. What age are the men you employ?—36 to 38, and 42 or 44.

7562. You have men of military age?—Yes.

7563. Were they in the Army?—No. During the war I had 2 horsemen and a foreman, and both the horsemen were exempted on condition that they remained with me.

7564. Would you mind telling us whether you bought this farm in the open market or whether it was by private treaty?—I bought it in the open market.

7565. On 20 years' purchase?—Yes, at £25 an acre.

7566. Does not the fact that you bought this farm go a long way to show that you do believe in the future of agriculture, and that you have some faith in it after all?—No, because I have never been an arable farmer. My heart has never been in it. I am a stock breeder. I was told that for 4 years on the corn land on existing prices at which I bought the farm I should lose money; but my heart is in shorthorns, and if I lose on the swings I will make it up on the round-abouts.

7567. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: How many years have you been farming altogether?—I have been farming 8 years.

7568. What was your experience before 1915: were you a stock raiser?—To tell you the truth I was farming at a rent of 35s. an acre; and as I lost money in those 4 years I destroyed every account I had for that farm, but it was proved that I lost money. I was a tenant.

7569. And now you are making money on this farm?—I am going to try and make it.

7570. You have made it?—I have been making it. As this gentleman pointed out, for 4 years my average returns are too small for my outlay.

7571. According to the actual cost per acre and the value per acre, you are losing on these acres £11 17s. 1d.?—On 26 acres.

7572. It is more than that; it is on 98 acres. Deduct the profit that you make on the one, and add them up, and you make £2 1s. 1d. on one lot, £1 0s. 8d. on the other, which makes £3 1s. 9d., and there is a loss on the other side?—I have not worked those averages out.

7573. You make out a loss here of £15 1s. 10d. against a profit of £3 1s. 9d. That will never do. According to your own précis, you lose £11 17s. 1d. Why go on, if all these years have shown you such a disastrous result?—Because I am building up a herd of shorthorns, and I expect this spring to sell 7 young bulls.

7574. You want to make it on the breeding?—Yes.

7575. And you use the farm merely as a *pied de terre*, something to hang on?—Yes.

7576. Therefore, as you say your heart is not in the growing of cereals, you really do not care very much about it. In answer to Sir William Ashley, you said that you credited something for the produce you consumed in the house?—Yes; that is all shown in detail, not here, but in the details eliminated by the Income Tax Surveyor.

7577. I do not want you to produce your Income Tax Surveyor's return; but how much do you make it?—This last year it was somewhere about £80.

7578. Which you credit to the receipts in respect of what you used in farm produce and fowls in the house?—Yes, it was £80 and so much.

7579. Would that include what you handed over to the workmen as perquisites, such as milk, and so on?—It includes all stuff consumed in the house.

7580. Do you sell anything outside, such as fowls, or anything?—If there is any, it comes in the dairy produce and poultry income.

7581. But £63 is all you have for 1915?—Yes.

7582. You suggest, although you do not want it yourself, a minimum guarantee of 90s.?—I qualified it, I think, and said, dismissing the calculation on heavy land, I should say 70s.

7583. What do you think would be the effect of the guarantee in keeping up the world's prices?—The guarantee would have no effect on the prices as they were.

7584. Why not?—Because there are other buyers.

7585. But you know we import five-sevenths of our wheat, and at the best we can only produce two-sevenths. If we have five-sevenths to buy, and the sellers of those five-sevenths know we must have it,

will not the effect be that they will not sell it at less than 70s., when they know there is a minimum here?—No; not when the supply of the world becomes normal, because they cannot take it away from us and dump it where it is not wanted.

7586. You said that farmers had made money and paid their overdrafts off?—Yes.

7587. So that those who put their capital in overdrafts have now paid them off and have got the capital themselves?—Yes.

7588. And they do not want to lose it?—No. They want to keep it.

7589. And you think they should do so?—Yes.

Chairman: We thank you very much.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Mr. CASTELL WREY, recalled and further examined.

7590. *Chairman*: You were kind enough to say you would come again to supplement the evidence which you gave on the former occasion when you were a witness here before the Royal Commission?—Yes.

7591. You have put in a statement showing the cost of production for the years 1917-18 and 1918-19, and your farming accounts and balance sheets*?—Yes.

7592. You have also put in summaries of valuations which show the total value and the average per head of the horses, cattle, sheep and pigs?—Yes.

7593. Will you allow me to put those in without reading them out?—Yes.

7594. *Mr. Smith*: In the summaries of valuations, do you test the position yourself later in regard to the valuations made or do you just accept them?—I have to accept them; I have nothing to do with the figures.

7595. You do not form any opinion of your own as to how far they are satisfactory or anything of that sort?—Yes, I have a very strong opinion with regard to them.

7596. Would you state that in the latter years these valuations have been all up to market prices?—I have a letter from the valuers here which I will read to you if you will allow me.

7597. If you please?—I saw one of the partners of the firm in Peterborough last Saturday, and I told him that the question you have just raised had been suggested—I think by Mr. Overman—the last time I was here, and I asked him if he could give me some statement as to how he arrived at his figures. This is the letter he has written me: "Dear Sir,—With reference to our conversation as to the annual stocktaking valuation we have made on the Apethorpe Home Farms. We have considered the several systems suggested at various times by our clients as to these valuations. What we have done is; cultivations and tenant-right—as nearly as possible as if we were valuing for an outgoing tenant on quitting. Implements and machinery: A deduction for wear and tear and an addition for new stock added. Live stock: Breeding stock and working horses not likely to be sold, at a fair standardised price, not according market variations of the moment, otherwise the same animal might compare most illogically with its previous or future price in the valuation. Young stock certain to be marketed and draft ewes, drape cows and surplus horses: At their market price on the day of valuation. We know the difficulties, but the great thing is to show the true state of the farm as a going concern and not as about to be broken up. Young horses, when put in team, at market price."

7598. Do you deduce from that that on the average these figures would represent something below market prices, taken altogether?—Except for stock that he thinks is actually ready for marketing.

7599. I suppose the beasts, so far as their condition for marketing is concerned, would average practically the same each year?—Yes, I think they would.

7600. Has not the price for beasts increased more than from £14 to £20 a head between 1914 and 1919?—You are speaking of cattle, I imagine?

7601. Yes?—£19 19s. as against £14 14s.

7602. Yes, I should have thought the difference in market price between the two periods was rather more than that?—Yes, but, as he says, he does not value anything at market price, except what is actually going to be marketed.

7603. These valuations at any rate in the latter years show on the low side rather than any tendency to inflation?—I should think the valuations are very conservative. May I say I wrote to the Secretaries and said that I had an explanation which I wished to make with regard to the evidence I gave when I was here before. The explanation I desire to make is this: "I very much regret that my answer to question No. 3879 in so far as what I may term the cricket match and threshing incident was inaccurate; the incident did not take place. An assistant overheard a conversaiton between some of the men on another of the farms which led him to think that they were not threshing that day, and without verifying the men's statement informed me that threshing was not going on, and also without verifying it, I myself repeated the statement. I am extremely sorry that I should have made such a statement to you without having substantiated the facts and beg you to accept my regrets."

7604. *Mr. Parker*: I have been looking at the figures in your accounts from 1913 to 1918. I see that the years 1913 and 1914 show a loss and the years 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918 show a profit. The balance of profit on those years is £5,490. During that period from 1913 to 1918 your valuation increased from £21,009 to £31,651. The average of capital in the farm is, therefore, about £24,900. If you allow 6 per cent. on that capital you would want £1,500 a year and six times £1,500 is £9,000. The balance between your profitable years and your unprofitable years is a profit of £5,490. If you set off against that £9,000 for interest the net result in those years shows a loss of £3,510, does it not?—The question is rather a long one, and there are a large number of figures in it, I am afraid.

7605. Yes, it is a long question. What I am putting to you is that on the six years there is a heavy loss shown?—As far as the balance sheet goes, but I do not think there was a loss.

7606. These are actual figures that I am putting to you?—Four years' profit and two years' loss.

7607. You have put nothing in for interest on your capital?—No. I explained that point the other day.

7608. I am putting to you that if you allow six per cent. interest on your capital there is a considerable loss shown over that period of years?—If you count the interest on capital in, but I do not think you should count it in.

7609. I am putting to you that if you allow six per cent. on the capital?—I think the actual figures for the six years show a profit.

7610. The actual figures without allowing anything for interest show a profit of £5,490, but if you allow six per cent. for interest, which comes to £9,000, they show a loss of £3,510. Therefore, if you allowed anything for interest on your capital during that period the farm would show a loss?—But I do not allow anything for interest. If I buy rubber shares and do not get any interest I do not write my rubber account down, and why should I do it in farming? The interest is your profit in my opinion.

7611. *Mr. Nicholls*: In the calculations you put before the Commission in your evidence when you were previously examined, did you go back to the time when the Apethorpe farm was taken over by Mr. Leonard Brassey or were they only in respect of the period during which you have been there?—The evidence I gave was over the eight years; it did not go back to the date when Mr. Brassey took it over. I gave the circumstances in which he took it over.

7612. *Mr. Lennard*: Following up the questions Mr. Parker asked you just now, I understood you to say last time that the farm was practically a rabbit warren when it was first taken over?—Yes.

* *See* Appendix III.

7613. You would expect it to have shown a larger profit if it had been in a better condition to start with?—Certainly.

7614. *Mr. Langford*: I think you told us when you were here last that you had sold out a lot of pedigree cattle?——Yes.

7615. Does that account for the abnormal receipts for cattle in the year 1918-19—£7,579? Did that amount go to make up your profits of that year?—Yes.

7616. If you had not had a sale of pedigree stock there would have been no profits from any other branch of your farming, would there?—Yes, there would.

7617. Can you tell us what was the average price of the cattle sold at that sale?—No, I am afraid I cannot from memory.

7618. My point is that if you had not had a very good sale of pedigree cattle in that year your accounts would show a loss instead of a profit. At any rate your purchases of cattle in that year appear to be £637 15s., and you sold cattle to the amount of £7,579 0s. 5d., so that your sales were nearly £7,000 in excess of your purchases that year?—Yes.

7619. I take it that amount would go into your profits?—Yes.

7620. The profits for that year were £2,918 7s. 9d.?—Yes.

7621. So that it would appear you would have made a loss on that year of something like £4,000 if you had not had this abnormal sale of cattle?

7622. *Chairman*: You had better be careful that you are dealing with the same figures. The valuation at the beginning of that year 1918-19 was £31,651 and the valuation at that end of the year was £31,426 after having sold out the cattle. Looking at those figures do you still say that the profit of £2,918 7s. 9d. arose only from the sale of cattle?—I cannot say only.

7623. *Mr. Langford*: I submit to you that if you had not had this sale of pedigree cattle your loss for the year 1918-19 would have been approximately £4,000?—I am afraid I do not agree.

7624. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: I think you told us last time you were here that you believe in farms of rather a large area from an economical point of view?—Yes.

7625. Was it 1,000 acres you told us?—No, 10,000 acres.

7626. Assuming you employ three men to the 100 acres and that the object of the Board of Agriculture is to get more men back to the land, if these 10,000 acres were cut up into farms of 100 acres each, providing for a family of five, would not that give us an addition of two men per 100 acres more on the land?—Yes, but you started the question by saying that the Board of Agriculture wanted more men on the land. You do not say what for. If the Board of Agriculture want increased production I say they would be more likely to get it from 10,000 acre farms than from 100 acre farms.

7627. Would not the 10,000 acre farm mean that there would be fewer people living on the land?—Yes, you might have fewer, but you would have more production.

7628. Do results go to prove that large farms produce more than small farms?—There are so few large farms in England that you can make no comparison really.

7629. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: Your profit is made largely on cattle, is it not?—On general farming of all sorts.

7630. You do a lot of cattle raising?—Yes, but we raise a lot of sheep, too, and horses and pigs.

7631. Your principal profit is derived from that?—I can hardly say. I should think there is more profit in stock than there is in cereals.

7632. Have you ever tested which is the more profitable to you?—No, I have not.

7633. I see in one year you have got a very large amount for cattle?—It varies with the acreage; the area is a good deal bigger some years than others.

7634. Can you tell me by how much the acreage under wheat has been increased since or by reason of the guarantee?—There has been no increase at all owing to the guarantee. There has been an increase of arable land owing to the Food Production Committees compelling us to break up more land.

7635. That has been the only effect?—Yes.

7636. Has your experience of that broken up land been that it has produced four quarters to the acre as an average of wheat?—Not on my own farm, but I have seen some good crops, and also some complete failures.

7637. What is the average?—It is impossible to say. I only run one district in Northamptonshire.

7638. In your district in Northamptonshire what should you say has been the result of breaking up land as regards the actual return per quarter of wheat?—That is a very difficult question, but I should think 2½ quarters of wheat would be very near the mark.

7639. 2½ quarters of wheat per acre according to the figures before us could never pay for production?—No, I do not think it would.

7640. It requires about four quarters to pay according to the evidence before us?—Yes, I should think that would be so, taking the average.

7641. A great deal of the land that has produced wheat has produced it at a loss?—A great deal, no doubt.

7642. *Mr. Green*: Did the County Committee compel you to break up any of your farm?—Yes, 258 acres.

7643. Out of the 2,700?—No, a good deal of it was arable before.

7644. Do you think the net output per man would have been greater on a large farm like yours if you had instituted some system of co-partnership?—I do not think during war time it would have been.

7645. Do you think it might now if you give the men some financial interest in the farm yourself?—I am very much in favour of that sort of thing, although I have never seen a scheme yet which I could work to. Of course, under present day conditions where we have women and German prisoners employed, and labour is so unsettled, any proposition of taking the workers into co-partnership would never work, especially as so many of the women are giving up agriculture and going back to other occupations.

7646. From your experience on a large farm such as yours, do you find that young fellows returning from the Army are more inclined to work in gangs than they would be inclined to work in isolated small holdings?—I have never been in the privileged position of having a gang of men since the war, so I cannot answer that. I wish I was in such a position.

7647. *Mr. Edwards*: I should like to know whether these returns—which are very interesting and require some study—refer to one farm worked from a common centre or whether they really refer to a large number of farms in which the results have been added together?—No, it is all one large farm. I have a plan of it here if you would care to see it. (*Handing plan.*)

7648. Is it all within a ring fence?—Yes.

7649. You appear before us with these figures, and you give it as your opinion that large farms are more economical and likely to produce more for the nation than comparatively small ones?—Yes, I do.

7650. Could you tell us what is the tendency in the United States of America in regard to the area of their farms?—No, I cannot.

7651. The impression on the whole given from the figures which you have brought before us in reference to your farm, which I presume is one of the largest in England, is not a very encouraging one, is it?—No, I do not think it is.

7652. It is neither encouraging so far as the profit is concerned, nor so far as the produce per acre is concerned?—No, I do not think it is.

7653. Still, you say large farms is the remedy for the present state of affairs with regard to agriculture in this country?—Yes, I think they are.

7654. Your produce per acre comes to a very low one compared with the average of the country, does it not?—The 3 quarters to the acre, do you mean?

7655. Yes?—Yes, it is lower than the average.

7656. Would you be surprised to hear that we had a witness from Yorkshire here this morning who said that the average on his farm, and on farms of equal size in his county, was from 4 to 4½ quarters per acre?—No, I should not be at all surprised to hear that.

7657. Would you be surprised to hear that he said that a neighbouring small farm owner has actually threshed 7 quarters of wheat to the acre?—No, it is quite possible.

7658. Does that not go a long way to counteract your opinion as to the value to the nation of large farms as compared with small farms?—No, not at all.

7659. What is the real object of farming?—It depends which way you look at it.

7660. I should like to get it from your point of view as a farmer or as a citizen. What is your object in handling the land?—I am here to give evidence, and if you will give me the question in such a form that I can answer it I will try to do so. I do not know what you have got at the back of your mind.

7661. I have nothing at all at the back of my mind. What I want to know is, what is the object of a man handling a farm?—More economic production in the handling of a big farm.

7662. Yes I have given you two instances of greater production on the smaller farms. I have given you an instance of one small farmer producing 7 quarters of wheat to the acre, and you on a large farm only produce 3. Still you tell me that a large farm is more economical than a small farm?—Did the witness from Yorkshire tell you what rent he was paying for his farm?

7663. No?—If you want to draw a comparison between the production on different farms you have to ascertain what the respective rents are.

7664. Rent is a secondary thing in my experience nowadays?—I am afraid that is not my experience.

7665. *Mr. Duncan*: Following up that point, this farm which you have been working and of which you have submitted a plan, was not designed to provide an illustration of the advantages of farming on a large scale, was it?—No, certainly not.

7666. You have simply taken the farm as it stood taking into account the quality of the land you have dealt with already, and you have shewn the results of that particular farm with all the disadvantages of the rabbit warren and so on, that you had to surmount at the start?—Yes. As I explained my chief took this estate over when it was practically in ruins, and he has been developing it ever since. As soon as he got a portion of the land cleaned he has let it, and where he has not been able to do so he has kept it in hand.

7667. So that you have been working the least advantageous portion of the land all the time?—Yes.

7668. Where you have got the land into condition you have let it off to a tenant and thereby reduced the value of the land that has remained?—Yes.

7669. You have practically taken out the eye of your land?—Yes, we have practically been farming the bad land all the time.

7670. So that the comparison on a large holding as compared to a small one in your case is of no value?—No, it is of no comparative value at all.

7671. With regard to your 1918-19 profit and loss account, and your sale of cattle in that year amounting to £7,579, was that an ordinary dispersal sale or a sale just in the ordinary way of your operations?—No, it was a pedigree herd which we desired to sell and we sold it off, but as a matter of fact I did sell rather more cattle that year than I have done in average years.

7672. *Mr. Cautley*: As a matter of fact according to my calculations I find that taking the cattle in stock in 1918 and the cattle bought and comparing those with the cattle sold in 1919 and the stock at the end of 1919 you made a profit on cattle of £4,517?—Yes.

7673. Whereas if you do the same calculations on your figures that you have given us to-day for 1917-18 it shews a profit on capital of only £1,877. It does shew, if these figures are accurate, and I think they are, that a great deal of this profit is due to the special sales of cattle in 1918-19?—Undoubtedly a certain amount of it is due to that. I do not think the whole thing is.

7674. You told us you were farming the bad lands most of the time?—Yes.

7675. What rent did you let the lands at that you had cleaned and let to tenants—which are the better lands?—I should not like to answer that question without referring. I cannot tell you exactly from memory, but I should think from 16s. to 18s.

7676. What is the rent you charge for the present lands you have in hand?—I think it is 12s. 5d. You can arrive at it if you will work it out.

7677. You did get a higher rent for the lands you let off?—Yes.

7678. Have you considered since the last time we met whether it is possible to fix any guarantee on any principle of a sliding scale?—Yes, I have considered it very carefully and a good deal. If I had been a more expert witness, I should not have answered as I did; I am afraid I rapped my answer out without due thought. I have considered it a great deal since, and I think if you get a sufficient number of reliable costings that your costings might be used as the basis of the price without actually fixing the price.

7679. That is not quite what I wanted to get at. The difficulty I find is this. Starting with the assumption that the farmer has to have some guarantee given to him, in the interests of the State, to protect him against loss by the world's prices owing to the greater risks that he is taking on in his business, and assuming that he has to have some guarantee given to him, we are told by everybody who has come here that it is desirable to have a policy laid down for farmers for some years ahead—say, five to eight years. I suppose you would agree with that?—Yes, I think so.

7680. If that has to be done we are faced with this difficulty, that everything which a farmer has to buy varies from day to day, and also that the labour which he has to employ can vary at a month's notice, or, shall we say for practical purposes at the three months' notice?—You say the articles the farmer has to buy?

7681. Yes, his feeding-stuffs, his fertilisers, his implements, and so on, are all fixed by the market price leaving out control prices and looking to the future. The prices of all those things will vary from day to day?—There are very few things that are not controlled to-day.

7682. I am not considering the things that are controlled to-day. As I say, I am looking to the future, when prices will vary from day to day?—With an open market?

7683. Yes, the price of everything the farmer has to buy will in the future vary from day to day, his implements, his seed, his corn, his feeding-stuffs, and his labour, which is fixed under the Wages Board, can be varied at a month's notice, or for practical purposes at two to three months?—Yes.

7684. To my mind that is an insuperable difficulty in fixing any reliable guarantee for such a period as has been suggested, having regard to the change in conditions and variations. Therefore, I am anxious to see if it is possible to arrive at any system by which a guarantee could be fixed that would vary according to some ratio either of wages or of the cost of living or the cost of the expenses of the farm, or something of that kind?—That very long question of yours simplified really means, do I think it possible to have a scale of prices which may be on a sliding scale according to what the farmer may have to buy or may have to pay in wages?

7685. Either on a sliding scale fixed on wages, so that if wages went up the guarantee went up, and if wages went down the guarantee went down, or if the general costs went up the guaranteed price would go up, and if they went down the guaranteed price would go down. Have you considered that since the last session?—Yes, I have often thought of that, and I have considered it again carefully since. I cannot see any solution of it.

7686. You cannot help us in that respect?—No, I am afraid not. You have brought up two things which are so very difficult. One is the question of the price of feeding-stuffs, practically all of which are imported. We have no control over them in this country, and we cannot stimulate the growth of

them, but if farms were worked on a more business-like system than I think the majority of farms are worked to-day, and were better organised, I think we should have a better class of labourer who would take more interest in his work. There are, in my opinion, two difficulties, one is the organisation of the business of farming, and a better response from the labourer. If farming were organised in a better way the labourer would take more interest in his work, and there would be less necessity for the Wages Board—they would not interfere so much. The other difficulty is the question of feeding-stuffs for which we are practically dependent upon foreign markets, and you cannot compare them with the produce of our own home market, in my opinion, as the one is so very divergent and far apart from the other. There is no meeting ground to handle the price upon.

7687. We do not get very far. Does the cost of wages form any recognised proportion of the cost of producing wheat, for instance?—There is no doubt about that.

7688. They do?—Of course they do.

7689. They form a proportion. Is there any recognised percentage?—I should not like to mention any percentage.

7690. *Mr. Ashby*: I would like you to consider rather carefully for the moment this question of the pedigree stock sale that you mentioned. Was it not inevitable during the war that there should be some accumulation of pedigree stock in the country because of the difficulty of getting exports of stock away? Let me put it in this way: In your particular case although the amount of profit shown in the year 1918-19 was very largely due to the stock sale, you had been accumulating that stock for some years and the charge of maintaining that stock had shown in the previous profit and loss accounts?—Yes. that it quite true.

7691. It is quite possible, therefore, that in your case you had not been having the normal sales of pedigree stock in the two or three preceding years because, like some other pedigree breeders you found it difficult to sell your pedigree stock during the war period?—Yes. I am afraid I influenced my chief to sell the pedigree herd because I did not think it was a business proposition for a farmer.

7692. Your general position, as you said last time, is that the pedigree herd is rather a drag on the rest of the farm?—Yes, it certainly was.

7693. And it was difficult in any case to make real profits on a pedigree herd?—Looking at it from a farming point of view I think it is, but if you specialise in pedigree stock it is a very fine business.

7694. Although the profits on this sale did affect that particular year's result, the charges for maintenance would come into the previous years' accounts?—Yes, a great many years.

7695. Bearing in mind the letter you have read to us as to the principles upon which your valuations are carried out you will agree, I suppose, that if it were necessary say this autumn to disperse the stock of the farm the value you would expect to realise would be very much greater than the valuation?—Yes, a great deal.

7696. I notice, as a matter of fact, that the valuation has only increased about 35 per cent.?—Yes.

7697. Roughly speaking the market value, assuming the beasts have remained of the same quality has gone up at least 100 per cent.?—I take your figures, I have not worked it out myself.

7698. I think this is rather an important question, because you do, as a matter of fact, show profits for the last five years?—Yes.

7699. The valuation as you have said is quite a conservative one, and it looks as though the valuation only increasing by, say, 35 per cent., nothing that is likely to happen so far as we can see during the next year or two as regards a fall in prices will affect your valuation?—No, I do not think it will. I think the valuations have been very conservatively made.

7700. So that the total results are, as a matter of fact, rather better than are shewn by the balance sheets?—Yes, I am sure they are.

7701. Now will you turn to your costings just for a moment. In Table 1 (*a*), if you run down the rate of wages for men from September to the middle of October, 1917, you have 4s. 6d.?—Yes.

7702. On August 12th, 1918, it is 9s. 1d., is it not?—Yes.

7703. That is another year ahead?—Yes.

7704. That is a special harvest rate?—Yes.

7705. You have the figure of 6s. as the rate per day of a horse?—Yes.

7706. How do you arrive at that?—I have not; I have taken the local custom for that figure.

7707. You have not been able to cost your horse labour?—No, I have not been able to do it in the past, but I hope to be able to do it in future.

7708. *The Chairman*: On the last occasion you said you were working out the cost and you thought it would come to less than 6s.?—Yes.

7709. *Mr. Ashby*: In Table 1 (*b*) you have differential rates for horse labour, 6s. and 3s. 4d. Can you tell us how that is?—I see it is there, but I really cannot explain it; it is an error, I am afraid.

7710. In that case why should you make the difference between 6s. for drilling and 3s. 4d. for harrowing?—I am afraid it is an error. I had not noticed it myself until you pointed it out to me. It ought all to have been at 6s.

7711. That would necessitate a revision of the total figures, would it not?—Yes, it would.

7712. Would you look at rents. I see in Table 1 (*a*) you have rent at 10s. per acre and in Table 1 (*b*) you have rent at 5s. per acre?—Each field on the farm was valued by the valuers in 1915 field by field and a separate rent apportioned to each field.

7713. You use their valuation for this purpose?—Yes.

7714. Would you look at 1 (*a*), rates 2s. 8d. in the £ on £4?—Yes.

7715. That is 8s. an acre assessed value, but you would not pay 2s. 8d. in the £, because you would only pay on half the value of agricultural land?—Yes, that is so.

7716. Management you put down at 2s. 9d. per acre. How do you arrive at that figure for management?—Half of the agent's salary and the whole of the bailiff's salary is put in and divided by the number of acres.

7717. I understand that in the profit and loss account you did not include the management?—No, it is not included.

7718. You have not the whole of the farm costings, have you?—No, I have not.

7719. If you had, the accounts would not agree on that basis, would they?—Yes, if you had them on an acreage basis.

7720. They would not agree unless you put the management into the statement of expenditure and income?—The costings are worked on a field to field basis, and of course for the balance sheet it is worked on the total results of the farm.

7721. How do you get at the interest on the machinery, for example?—I worked it out on rather a rough system, but it is only the way I can arrive at it really.

7722. Do you take as your capital value of the machinery just the machinery which is used on the arable farm or the total machinery used on the farm?—The total and spread it over the whole acreage of the farm.

7723. I notice you have in all cases "cartage of wheat to station at 1s. per quarter."—Yes.

7724. That is according to a local estimate, is it?—Yes. It is a long mile and a half to the station, and a 1s. a quarter is a fair price.

7725. *Mr. Batchelor*: If you look at Table 1 (*a*), that is, 10 acres you have got "cutting with binder half day 13s. 6½d."?—Yes.

7726. The details are given, one man at 9s. 1d. and three horses at 6s.?—Yes.

7727. Is that a 4 ft. 6 binder?—No, I should think it would be a 6 ft. binder.

7728. Do you really suggest that with one man and three horses you could cut 10 acres of wheat in half a day with such a binder—do you seriously state that such a binder would cut 20 acres in a day?—It would depend upon the field of course. I do cut 20 acres a day on some fields.

7729. May I refer to your book which is of very recent date. You mention that a 12 ft. binder with five horses and one man will cut 13½ acres per day; an 8 ft. binder with four horses and one man will cut 8 8-9ths acres per day, and that a 4 ft. 6 binder with three horses and one man will cut 5 acres per day?—What page is that on?

7730. Page 40. Those figures do not seem to tally with your figure in Table 1 (*a*) that you can cut 20 acres per day with one man and three horses?—If you look about 8 lines up from the bottom of the page I say, "For example, say the ordinary binder cuts five acres." I am only taking five acres as an example; I do not say it only cuts five acres; it cuts a good deal more.

7731. How many acres might it cut?—I should think 7½ acres, or something like that would be a fair thing.

7732. Would you be surprised to know that in Scotland it is the usual thing to cut 10 acres in a day?—What sized binder?

7733. With a 4 ft. 6 binder?—Perhaps they work harder than our farm labourers do.

7734. Have you ever been to Scotland to see the farm work that is done there?—No—I have only been once, and my experience then was only of a very small district.

7735. What I want to get at is how you could cut 10 acres in half a day with one man and three horses?—I said a 6 ft. binder; it may have been an 8 ft. binder; I cannot tell. If it was an 8 ft. binder it would be perfectly easy to do it.

7736. Would an 8 ft. binder not require four horses?—Yes, it would.

7737. If you look at Table 1 (*b*) you will see that you are cutting with a binder there with two men at the rate of 9s. 1d. each per day and six horses at the rate of 6s. each a day, total £2 14s. 2d. per day. Is there any special reason why that should be so heavy compared with Table 1 (*a*)?—Very possibly we had wet weather or wet ground to work on, and they would naturally go slower if that was so—or there might have been a break down.

7738. It is the same month and the same year, I think?—It would be the same year anyhow—yes, I see it is the same month and the same day, too.

7739. They had not been working so well?—Very possibly, but I cannot answer these details at this distance of time; it is quite impossible on a large farm like that. These figures are given me by the foreman for each farm of what happens during the day.

7740. Look at Table 1 (*g*) with reference to swedes. The cost of your singling swedes comes to 63s. 9d., which is equal to about 7s. per acre. Can you get it done at that?—I have not worked it out, but I take it for granted that that is right.

7741. I have worked it out and that is right. It seems a small sum, does it not?—Yes, very.

7742. Would 30s. an acre not be nearer the mark?—Yes, on an ordinary crop, but this was a practical failure as you can see. We only kept 108 sheep on the nine acres for a week. That was the whole crop, so that it would not require very much singling.

7743. Look at the profit and loss accounts at the items under the heading of "Expenditure on Implements." You seem to have spent a big lot of money on implements particularly last year. In the year 1918-19 the expenditure is £1,375 5s. 11d.?—Yes.

7744. Did you buy a big lot of machinery in the year ending 1918-19?—Yes, I bought a traction engine, but I maintain these items ought to be in capital, and my profits ought to be increased by that amount.

7745. On the credit side in each account you have considerable sums for hire of horses, tackle, &c.—Yes.

7746. In the year 1911 the amount is £1132 17s. 3d.?—Yes.

7747. What work did you hire those horses for?—General estate work; it would be hauling timber or bricks.

7748. That is charged against the estate?—Yes, we charged the estate with it.

7749. Do you think that enables you to get more value out of your horses than an ordinary farmer would be able to do?—Yes, certainly.

7750. Can you tell me on how many days per year you calculate one of your horses would be working?—I have asked several of the carters, and the average they give me is that a horse stands off for ten days in the year, and, of course, for the 52 Sundays. Some of them varied; some of them were off for six and others fifteen days, but I think six is too low.

7751. You will not have made any allowance for frost or snow in that case?—In that sort of weather it is possible to get the horses out and put them on to hauling timber.

7752. If the horses have no holidays do not the men have holidays?—Yes.

7753. Are the horses worked on those occasions by men other than the regular men?—Yes; for example, there are usually a couple of girls doing chain harrowing.

7754. You do not give the horses much holiday?—No.

7755. Will you look at the item with regard to insurance for 1918-19: the amount you expended in insurance is £125 11s. 11d.?—Yes.

7756. How many employees have you, roughly?—Between 50 and 60 now.

7757. Does that cover all the risks that you insure your men against—do you insure them against accident?—Yes.

7758. Have you any third party risk insurances?—I do not think we have on the farm.

7759. Have you insurances for the engine and fire insurance?—Yes.

7760. Yet it does not come to anything more than £125 11s. 11d.?—No.

7761. On what basis do you insure your dead stock—your crops?—I am afraid I cannot tell you off-hand. I know we have increased them considerably the last few years since corn has been so valuable.

7762. You do not know whether you insure them only up to three-fourths in order to get the benefit of the average and put your crops in different parts of the farm so that they will not all be burnt at one time if there should happen to be a fire?—On a very large farm like this they are naturally all distributed.

7763. You realise, of course, the benefit that is to be got by putting these in as one farm from the point of view of fire insurance?—Yes, we do.

7764. Now will you look at the valuation fees charged in the account for the year to 6th April, 1918. It was £40. In the year ending 6th April, 1917, it was £138 12s.?—Yes.

7765. Is that an accumulation of years?—Is there anything preceding 1917?

7766. I do not see anything in 1916?—Then it would be an accumulated account. It would be simply a valuation of the stock at Lady Day as there were possibly no outgoing tenants.

7767. Look at the summary of valuation dealing with horses in 1919. I make it that at the 6th April, 1918, you had 67 horses in hand of a value of £3,812?—Yes.

7768. During the year up to the 6th April, 1919, you bought no horses?—No.

7769. But on the other hand you sold horses to the value of £95 15s.?—Yes.

7770. Have you any idea of how many that might be?—Two—one for £90 and the other for £5.

7771. That would make 65 horses standing at £3,716 5s.?—Yes.

7772. You have this year 68 horses—that is three more—and those three horses have to account for £380 of increase without taking any depreciation into consideration?—Would that not come in in breeding?

7773. No, you have the same horses in this case. You start with 67 and you only sold two?—I may have brought in three.

7774. Yes, but those three have to account for a difference of £380 as well as for any depreciation you have written off the 65?—The valuation has risen from £56 17s. up to £60 4s. a head so that that would account for some of it.

7775. You have put them up although the horses are getting older?—The young horses are getting more valuable.

7776. Have you put anything in for depreciation?—I do not put anything in at all.

7777. That is what you imagine has been done by the valuers?—Yes.

7778. In regard to the value of horses this last year you have appreciated your horses?—The valuers may have done so, I have not. The valuers say that they value breeding stock and working horses not likely to be sold at a fair standardised price not according to market variations of the moment, and they go on: "Young stock certain to be marketed and draft ewes, drape cows, and surplus horses—at their market price on the day of valuation."

7779. In your 1914 profit and loss account I see that the stock on hand at the 6th April, 1914, is £23,671 6s. 4d.—Yes.

7780. The details of the valuations which you have given us only account for £23,279 3s. 11d. There is a difference of £392 2s. 5d. Do you know why that should be?—No, I am afraid I do not; I was not in charge in 1914.

7781. Similarly in 1915 taking the figure in the profit and loss account for that year the valuation is £22,624 19s. 6d.?—Yes.

7782. Your summary of valuation at that period only amounts to £22,444 15s. 6d.?—You are speaking of the separate summary I gave with regard to live stock.

7783. Yes. That is a difference of £180 4s. 0d.?—That would be live and dead stock, would it not?

7784. I do not know how it is made up?—I do not understand the difference certainly.

7785. If you will take the next one for the year 1916 there is a difference again. The valuation is £23,520 15s. 6d. and in the summary it amounts to £22,960 4s. 6d., a difference of £560 11s. 0d. My reason for asking you particularly is that when you come to 1917 the figures are identical and in 1918 and 1919 they are identical also?—I am afraid I cannot explain that.

7786. *Mr. Overman*: In going back to the cattle sold in 1918, £7,579, was that a sale of dairy cattle?—No, Aberdeen Angus.

7787. How many did you sell at the sale?—91 or 92.

7788. Do you remember what they averaged?—No, I am afraid I cannot tell you now.

7789. They were fat cattle?—No, Aberdeen Angus breeding cattle.

7790. Did they make anything like £100 apiece?—No, I am sure they did not; I cannot remember in the least what they fetched.

7791. That accounts for the difference in the numbers, I take it, in 1918, 496 beasts, and in 1919. 402 beasts. That is the reason you were short of cattle in 1919?—Yes, that would account for a good deal of the decrease.

7792. I see the profits on the cattle that year, taking the two valuations, amounting to £4,429 12s. 11d. made out of cattle that year—that is the difference?—Yes.

7793. Really the difference in the two valuations brings it up to a profit of £2,918 7s. 9d., which really amounts to what you made that year?—Yes.

7794. You have answered that question: you said in a way the profit was due to the special sale of pedigree cattle?—Yes, I think it is partly.

7795. In taking your valuation can you tell me how your valuer values your implements? Does he take them piece by piece or at the same price as last year with a deduction for depreciation?—The implements on the farm are valued every three years in detail, and every year at the annual valuation they are depreciated; we supply him with figures of the implements we bought that year which are added in at cost price, and the remainder of the implements are depreciated by the valuers.

7796. How much, can you tell me?—No, I do not know; they do not tell me.

7797. The same with the machinery, I suppose?—Yes.

7798. All the estate work which is done by the horses is charged in this account, is it not?—Yes.

7799. That amounts to a very large sum coming to the farm?—Yes.

7800. Of course, that is an item which the ordinary farmer would not have on the side of receipts, would he?—He ought to if he kept books—of course, if he has the opportunity.

7801. Yes, but he would not have the opportunity in the ordinary course?—No, he would not have such an opportunity in the ordinary way very likely, but if he did get it he ought to show it.

7802. You cannot by your books in any way tell us how you arrive at the working days of the horses—you only arrive at it by inference from the enquiries you have made, I take it?—Yes.

7803. I must put it to you: I think there must be more than six days of frost in each year?—Possibly, but if we can get horses out for half a day we do it rather than keep them standing in the stables.

7804. Last autumn we had a continuous wet time from October until January when our horses were certainly not at work half the time on arable land?—Yes. I see we had only £387 in last year for that. Perhaps the frost accounted for it.

7805. *Mr. Rea*: In your valuation it is stated that the valuer took the stock that was going to be marketed soon at market prices?—Yes.

7806. The others he took at a sort of standardised value?—Yes.

7807. The same system would prevail in the earlier years, I presume?—Yes.

7808. So that there would be a fair proportion of rise?—Yes, I think the valuation has been very conservative; I had a long talk with the valuer about it the other day, as I told you.

7809. Everything has been raised in proportion from the earlier years, so that it will in fact show what has been the actual depreciation?—Yes. I do not think the depreciation has been anything in comparison to the actual increase in value—except in the case of stock which are absolutely ready for market.

7810. The other stock will have been raised in some sort of way; they will not have been kept at the same figures?—No. If you look back to 1914 you will see the beasts are put at an average price of 14 guineas, and if you look at 1919 you will see the average price for beasts is 19 guineas, that is, a 5-guinea rise.

7811. In 1916 there was a good rise of price. I take it that your cattle are actually valued at the market price of the day, and that the cattle are not the same from year to year. These are stock that you are buying, and they may be younger or older, taking one year with another?—No; we breed practically all our own stock.

7812. These are mostly home-breed cattle, are they?—Practically all of them.

7813. So that they will nearly all be of the same age and more or less of the same quality?—Yes.

7814. Mr. Henderson asked you how much land had been broken up owing to the guarantee, and you replied that nothing had been broken up owing to the guarantee, but that land had been broken up owing to the orders to plough up from the Executive Committee?—Yes.

7815. That sounds rather as if the guarantee was put on for the sake of inducing farmers to plough up their land. Is that your interpretation of it?—I am afraid it hardly is. I think my interpretation of the guarantee is more that the Government were frightened of labour or of the Labour Party than that they were anxious about the farmers' needs.

7816. Is it not rather that the Government saw that it was necessary for the safety of the country both now and in the future that more corn should be grown, and they put pressure on the farmers to grow up, and having done so they felt that they could not in justice press farmers to grow corn unless they guaranteed them against a very severe loss seeing that there was also a guarantee of wages?—The Government guaranteed wages, but I think it was the Selborne Committee's report which suggested that if the Government guaranteed wages they should also guarantee the farmer a productive price for his produce?

7817. Yes, but the whole thing hinged together, did it not?—When the Selborne Committee was sitting I do not think the submarine menace—although I believe Lord Selborne felt and anticipated

that it would become very strong—was actually in those days being felt with the severity with which it was being felt two years later, and I think the Corn Production Act was far more as a sop to labour than a sop to the farmer.

7818. By the time the Corn Production Act was introduced the submarine menace was pretty strong, was it not?—It was getting stronger then, but it was not introduced very rapidly, was it?

7819. Lord Selborne himself and his Committee saw the danger then and recommended as an international safeguard that more corn should be grown, and by the time the Corn Production Act was introduced the Government generally had recognised that, and I put it to you that the object of the Government was, if possible, to get the corn grown as a national safeguard against the shortage of food?—Yes, I think that was so to an extent, but I think the national future and prosperity of agriculture from the economic point of view was not studied at that time; it was merely a question of the submarine menace and labour.

7820. *Dr. Douglas*: Is it not the case that the Report of the Selborne Committee was issued in the early part of 1917?—I cannot tell you; I should have thought it was earlier, speaking from recollection. Is that the fact?

7821. I think you may take it so. Was not that the time when the submarine menace was at its height or immediately after?—Was the Report issued immediately the Committee finished its sittings?

7822. An Interim Report was issued long before it finished its sittings, but it is your evidence and not mine that we want. Does not the report of that Committee itself specifically refer to intimations from the Board of Admiralty?—I do not remember it.

7823. Perhaps you have not read the Report with the same care that some people have?—Perhaps not.

7824. *Sir William Ashley*: Would you be good enough to explain just a little further one or two things which you have already told us about? You have told us you arrived at the item for management, 2s. 9d. per acre, by distributing half the agent's salary and the whole of the bailiff's wages over the total acreage?—Yes.

7825. That is an acreage of 3,700?—No, 2,700.

7826. It says here, "3,700 acres." Is that a misprint?—The farm has varied from 4,150 to 3,700 and 2,700. It was 4,000 acres in 1911, but in those days there were no costs kept.

7827. What should these figures be?—The acreage of the farm in 1911 was 4,150, and to-day it is about 2,700.

7828. I roughly calculated that it would have been, on 3,700 acres, just over £500. On 2,700 it would have been very much less?—Very much more, would it not?

7829. Would you have any objection to telling us how much the bailiff's wages were?—£3 a week, I think.

7830. With regard to the interest on machinery, I was not quite clear how your accountant got at that 2s. 2d. per acre. Is not the machinery valued at its original price?—I think I explained that to Mr. Overman. The machinery is valued every three years by the valuers and depreciated, and in the case of any new machinery which is bought, that is put in every year at cost price, and to arrive at the 2s. 2d. I take the total value of the machinery employed on the farm and divide it by the number of acres.

7831. What percentage is it, do you happen to know?—Ten per cent. depreciation and 10 per cent. for repairs is what I allow off the capital value as fixed by the valuers.

7832. I see that in these tables, 1 (*a*) onwards, you have not entered any receipts from the sale of straw?—No, I do not sell any straw.

7833. Does the bailiff draw much food from the farm for his own consumption?—No: he gets milk and butter, and he is allowed the run of a pig, and he is allowed to feed his chickens.

7834. Do you know how the milk and butter is treated in the accounts?—It is charged for as sold.

7835. At market price?—At market price.

7836. *Mr. Cautley*: On the last occasion I was going to ask you about the rise in the value of feeding stuffs and fertilisers and you said you would bring up some figures?—Yes. I have brought those figures with me. I made my list rather more general than your question because I thought it might be more useful. I have a list of some of the items here bought in 1913, and also that I bought in 1918. I have the invoices here. The list is as follows:—

Year.	Article.	Price.				Year.	Price.			Remarks.
1913 to 1914.		£	*s.*	*d.*		1918 or 1919.	£	*s.*	*d.*	
April	Sheep shears	0	2	11						
,,	Petrol	0	1	1	per gallon	Dec.	0	3	6	No. 3 petrol.
,,	Shepherd's knife ...	0	1	6						
						1919.				
,,	Dandy brush	0	1	6		Jan.	0	2	9	
,,	Linseed cake	11	5	0	per ton	Nov.'13	19	18	8	Includes 8*s.* 8*d.* transport charges.
July	,, ,, ...	9	10	0	,,	Feb.'13	20	12	3	Includes 12*s.* 3*d.* transport charges.
April	Nitrate of soda	12	5	0	,,	Apl.'13	25	10	0	...
,,	Superphosphate... ...	2	10	6	,,	Jly.'18	6	7	6	...
						Oct.	1	19	6	...
June	Steam coal	0	18	9	,,	Dec.'18	1	14	0	...
April	Bran	7	0	0	,,	Au. '18	15	5	0	...
,,	Lining and stuffing cart saddle	0	3	6		May	0	5	6	...
						Oct.	0	6	0	
,,	Horse shoes and shoeing	0	3	8	per set	Nov.	0	7	0	...
June	Egyptian cotton cake, best flax	6	10	0	per ton	...	15	0	0	Home made ...
July	Rick cloth, 8 × 12 ...	7	4	0		...	8	0	0	Canvas 8 × 10 ...
Oct.	Red ochre	0	1	9	per 7 lbs.	Dec.'18	0	3	6	...
,,	Blue ochre	0	3	6	,,	...	0	5	3	
Aug.	Binder twine	40	0	0	per ton	...	120	0	0	...
Nov.	Bran	6	0	0	,,	...	17	14	4	Includes 19*s.* 4*d.* transport charges.
,,	Maize	1	6	0	per qtr.	Aug.	5	0	0	...
Feb.	Cotton waste	1	12	6	per cwt.	Apl.'18	2	10	0	...
June	Engine oil	0	2	9	per gallon	Jly.'18	0	3	10	...
Dec.	Halters	0	4	0	per ½ doz.	,,	0	15	0	...

7837. That is a list of nearly everything you had to buy?—Of as many things as I could compare the prices of in 1913-14 and 1918-19.

7838. Up to what date in 1919 does it go?—There is December, 1918, and January, 1919, for one item, a dandy brush.

7839. You have not got the current prices of to-day?—No, I have not.

7840. That is what interests me most?—They do not appear on the accounts I have presented.

7841. What price, for instance, have you got linseed cake at here?—I bought it in April, 1913, on one occasion for £11 5s. 0d. and in July for £9 10s. 0d. a ton and in November, 1918, at £19 18s. 8d. and February of 1919 at £20 12s. 3d.

7842. The price to-day is about £26?—Yes.

7843. That does not go quite so far as I had hoped. Take the price of sharps and middlings?—I have bran in 1913 at £7 and in August, 1918, £15 15s. 0d.

7844. Have you got maize?—Yes, November, 1913, £1 6s. 0d.; August, 1918, £5.

7845. Do you know what the price of it is to-day if you could get it?—I do not think you can get it at all to-day.

7846. Can you give me the price of middlings or sharps?—No, I cannot.

7847. Or of maize gluten?—No.

7848. Do you know as a matter of fact that these last items, middlings, sharps, and maize gluten, have gone up 30s. a ton these last three weeks?—No, I was not aware of that.

7849. Your list is helpful, but I wish it had gone right up to date. I asked you a question about costs and I gathered from what you said before that you wanted to say something about costs. There is nothing further that I want particularly, but I think you wish to add something to what you said before so you had better complete it?—Will you give me the number of the question?

7850. At question 4305 I said: "I should like to discuss the question of costings with you the next time you come here. You will come prepared with the cost of growing an acre of wheat, and if you would price out the operation I should be obliged to you, if you would not mind taking the trouble." You said: "I have got it all here already," and I said I could not follow it. Then I said: "If there is a particular question that you want answered and you will let me know through the Secretaries I will bring the details with me." Then I said: "I want to see the cost of the operation: how many times ploughing and harrowing and sowing and so on all the way down," and you said: "I have not got it here?"—Then you asked for a full rotation and I answered you that I could not give it you.

7851. Yes, is that so still?—Yes, I am afraid it is.

7852. You cannot add anything to that?—No.

7853. When I was questioning you a short time ago you began to mention something about costings and I rather interrupted you. I think there is something you wish to add about it?—What I was thinking of was some method of arriving at a cost of production that would suit all England.

7854. If you have anything to say about that will you just add it?—On thinking the matter over it seems to me that any prices you can collect might be useful taken arithmetically and used as a basis for a future price. If you put your figure I cannot say at an average, but at a price which would eliminate certain of the bad producers—it would be doing no harm to them—you might stimulate the moderate producer. Some farmers would be producing 7 quarters per acre and some only 3, and I should fix my price to suit the man who grows 4 to 4½, and stimulate the men from 3 quarters up to 4½; the 7 quarter men do not want any help.

7855. Prior to the war there had been an improvement in farming. You will agree with that?—Yes, certainly.

7856. I should be right in saying that farmers were at that time satisfied with their position?—Yes, I think they were more satisfied then than at any time I can remember in my life.

7857. That is the view I take with regard to it. Then we had the war, and we had Lord Selborne's Committee?—Yes.

7858. It was then for the first time authoritatively stated that pressure was to be put on and every inducement offered to farmers to increase production?—Yes, I think that is so, as far as I remember.

7859. Was it then pointed out that by so doing farmers would be incurring considerably further risks. Was not that at the bottom of Lord Selborne's report—that putting increased pressure on the farmer and requiring increased cultivation from him would subject him to increased risk from the world's prices or the fall of the market?—Yes, that is correct.

7860. Was it not then suggested that for those increased risks—not risks of weather, but risks due to competition from abroad—the guarantee should be given by way of compensation?—Yes.

7861. When the matter came into the House of Commons Parliament insisted on a guarantee of wages as well?—Yes.

7862. Is not the result that the guarantee of prices, whatever its effect, was not given at the request of the farmer, but at the instance of the State to secure him against these risks and the further obligation upon him to pay a fixed minimum rate of wages?—I am afraid I cannot answer that question without studying the matter a little more carefully, but I think it is far more likely it was done by the State with a view to increasing the production of food rather than with a view to the prosperity of the farmer.

7863. There is abroad among some sections of the community an idea that the guarantee is solely for the benefit of the farmer?—The general public have quite got that idea.

7864. You have given me your view, with which I entirely concur, that the farmer was satisfied with his position before the year 1914 and only wanted to be left alone?—I think he was.

7865. The guarantee was of no benefit to him except as a guarantee against a sudden fall in the world's prices?—The guarantee has up to now been of no actual benefit to him at all.

7866. *Mr. Ashby*: I am afraid these are matters of political history, but do you not remember on the outbreak of the war that some farmers' organisations passed a resolution demanding a guarantee, and in September, 1914, the farmers' representative in the House of Commons asked Mr. Asquith if he would consider giving farmers a guaranteed price for wheat, and he said No?—Were they important farmers' organisations or just some small local organisations?

7867. It came from the Central Chamber of Commerce. I should like to put one real question to you with regard to this matter of production. I understood you to say at the beginning of your evidence to-day that you thought large farms give a greater production than small farms—that one reason for organising large farms was that the production of large farms was greater?—Yes.

7868. Do you refer in that case to production per acre or production per man?—Both, I think. For instance, in the case of a large farm if you see a particular field going wrong you can splash down £1,000 for manure and bring it into condition. A small farmer has not the capital to do that.

7869. If you have a large farm you must have a large capital, but it does not always follow that you will have a larger capital per acre?—No, you will have a smaller capital per acre—considerably smaller.

7870. Yet you think you will get larger production?—Yes. I have gone very fully into that question in this little book of mine. I do not know whether you have read it.

7871. *Chairman*: You were kind enough to express an opinion on the last occasion with regard to the efficiency of labour, and I remember you very kindly said you would provide some evidence of the statements you had made with regard to the efficiency of labour. If you have that evidence with you I am sure the Commission will be glad to have it?—In order to bring this evidence before you I wrote to the Chairman of the Farmers' Union at Peterborough, Mr. Griffin, asking him if he could give me cases of wilful deterioriation of labour, and he writes me as follows:

"Boro' Fen, Peterborough, August 25th, 1919. Dear Mr. Wrey, In answer to your letter, if I can give you any evidence as to the decreased work of labour, I shall be glad to do so; it may be difficult to give concrete cases, but it is a well-known fact that can be vouched for by almost every farmer and employer of labour in this district, that the men do not work so well as they used to do; they come late and go home early, and if the farmer says anything they tell him they can get work somewhere else. In fact, the farmer has not been in a position to keep the men up to the mark and has to turn his back when he should speak, consequently the men have got slack. In the Crowland area the men do not come till seven and go home many of them at 2.45, and last winter they demanded and got 15s. per day for threshing. I shall no doubt be seeing you in Peterborough." That is signed by him. The next is a case from my own farm: "A lad of 18 years of age employed on the Home Farms at Apethorpe, was engaged to supply water to the engines when steam ploughing, also coals (when the water was sufficiently near to the engines to leave him to do so), at a weekly wage of 42s. On one occasion when hay-making a cart stood with coals within 20 yards of the engine, and he refused to supply the engine with coal, consequently I had to take a man and horse from the hay-carting and cart the coal to the engines. He absolutely refused to coal the engines and was, therefore, dismissed for wilfully refusing to do work which he was engaged to do." That statement is signed by my bailiff. Here is another case, also from my own farm: "An experienced shearer, was asked by the bailiff to help with the shearing this year and he would not. I went to see the man myself, and asked him to, and the answer he gave me in front of one of my assistants and one of the men working with him was that shearing was too hard work, and if he sheared all day he could not do his garden at night, and that he preferred to keep himself fit to do his own garden." I have a cutting here out of the "Agricultural Gazette" of August 18th, 1919, which I would like to read to you, if I may.

7872. I do not think that is quite evidence. You made a statement on the last occasion that you would bring forward evidence to support what you said, and, as a matter of fact, I do not think a report from a newspaper is evidence?—Very well, Sir, I will leave that out. I have another case here "Mr. R. L. King employed a man during haytime—dismissed at end of haytime as Mr. King did not require him. Mr. King got this man's name from the Local Labour Exchange for harvest work. Offered him 25s. per acre for cutting peas—the same price as his other men were receiving and were earning at the rate of 15s. per day. He agreed to come but did not turn up and has done no work since." Below that is written: "I have read over the above statement and certify it to be correct," and that is signed by Mr. R. L. King of Cotterstock, Peterborough. I have the original of that if you want it. Then, again, I have a letter from Mr. Samuel Moore of the Manor Farm, Thornhaugh, Peterborough, addressed to myself. It is dated the 30th August, 1919: "Dear Sir, Referring to our conversation in regard to agricultural hands witholding production, the following two cases have occurred on this farm recently. On August 10th last I sent a horse (one of a pair) to the smith's shop for shoeing. When this horse came back I arranged that it should go harrowing with the other horse that had been idle all day, these horses were yoking out at 2 o'clock p.m. when the waggoner came in the stable with the horses (half an hour before he ought to have done) and remarked if I kept the horses out he should not look after and care for them as he did not want them to go to work at all and he should leave: this man is a member of the Agricultural Workers' Union. Another case, on August 12th last. A boy of 14 years had been working a pair of horses harrowing for several days; through this boy becoming ill I had occasion to ask a regular hand of 21 years of age who had been demobilised a few months to go in his place. He flatly refused, saying he was not going to work horses although he was used to all farm work. He accepted the alternative and left my employ. The former case is a man about 26 years of age, was demobilised in February last, and was employed on this farm several years before the war. I trust the above cases will help you and I will say there are many men employed in agriculture at the present time who only want to get time over, and do as little work as possible. Yours faithfully, Samuel Moore." Then I have a letter from Mr. Leonard: "Manor Farm, Woodnewton, Peterborough. August 28th, 1919. Dear Sir, Your statement, I am sorry to say, is only too true. Some men try to do as little as possible since Government and chiefly *Union* influence. I had to dismiss one man in particular. I don't wish his name to be made public—for wilfully doing as little as he could when I was not near. I had to do it as all my other men said they would leave else, as they said he would not work himself nor allow them, without chaffing them. I can't complain of my present ones but only yesterday a lad of 16 was loading wheat and he refused to load any more after a quarter past seven. The cart was sent home empty. Eight o'clock is the time we work to when carting, so I have to pay all the others three quarter hour work which was not done through his action. I can't speak to him or should be told to do the work myself. I employ regular, 4 men 2 lads and boy, besides working self. Yours faithfully, John Leonard." I have another letter from Mr. Tate: "Sibson Manor, Wansford, Peterborough. 28th August, 1919. Dear Sir, I shall be pleased for you to make use of my name respecting tenants buying their farms, you must have misunderstood me. I did not say I wish I had never seen the farm"—I do not think I said that in evidence—"It will ruin many farmers who bought their farms, for the purpose of farming it themselves: many will be short of capital, that will stop production. At the present time everything is done to stop production, farmers must have a free hand for the good of the country. *It is very serious*, wheat is the cheapest corn grown instead of the dearest. Directly things are settled down the Government will drop the farmers like a red hot cinder, it is the vote that is the ruin of England. I shall be much worse off having bought my farm. I had an excellent landlord and an excellent agent, they always treated me well, and I only wish they were landlord and agent still, I should be far better off. Yours truly, H. J. Tate."

7873. Did he say what rent he paid before?—No; that is his letter just as he sent it to me.

7874. *Mr. Smith*: Do you not think that shows a spirit which is rather remarkable against the idea which you are seeking to establish when the men themselves make a very strong protest against the slacker. Is it not rather a remarkable feature in the industry for men to take up such an attitude?—Where have they done that?

7875. In one of the letters you read it says the other men protested and refused to work with the slacker?—This actual man was depreciating. That is the subject of the letter.

7876. You would not suggest that the isolated cases you quote would establish a general rule?—I could produce any number more. I have asked any amount of farmers to let me have cases, but although they have told me they know of such cases, I am afraid they are too lazy to produce them, regardless of their own interests.

7877. Does not that rather show a spirit on the part of the farmers which may become contagious and affect their workmen?—Possibly.

7878. If farmers themselves show a lazy spirit, and if they have in the past considered themselves to be superior persons as compared with their labourers, they ought not to be surprised at the labourer following the example they set, ought they?—I have no evidence on that point.

7879. I submit to you that these cases you have quoted—and I imagine you have made fairly extensive enquiries in your neighbourhood—do not reflect anything very serious, and that it is quite possible in pre-war times a similar number of cases may have existed?—You say it is not very serious. I think

it is very serious, especially in the tricky harvest we have been having, with so many wet days this season.

7880. I suggest to you the number of individual cases you have quoted are not very serious compared with the great body of workers?—They are out of all proportion to the number I could produce.

7881. Would it not be possible to find similar cases before the war?—Before the war one did not hear such general growling about it by the farmers as one hears now.

7882. Would that be due to the fact that they were paying such inadequate wages that farmers had no right to expect a great amount of efficiency from their workers?—I cannot answer as to that.

7883. That would be the tendency, would it not, that with the abnormally low wages they were paying their workers they would not care to check their men very much, and would not expect a very high standard of efficiency?—I do not think that necessarily follows.

7884. You quote one case where a man is a member of the Agricultural Workers' Union?—Yes.

7885. You do not suggest, do you, that the way that man acted would be endorsed by his Union—that such conduct is any part of the Union policy?—No, certainly not.

7886. *Mr. Lennard*: Would you agree that these examples of bad workmen which you have quoted to us do not in themselves show deterioration in the efficiency of labour, unless you can also produce proof that there were fewer cases of that sort in previous days?—As I answered Mr. Smith just now, one did not hear these constant grumblings on the part of farmers in pre-war days. Wherever you go now farmers are grumbling about the way labour is working.

7887. You were not in England just before the war, were you?—Yes.

7888. *Mr. Langford*: You have read to us a letter from a farmer who has bought his farm?—Yes.

7889. In which he complains that in consequence of purchasing his farm the interest on the money that he has so invested will amount to more than the rental he previously paid?—No, he does not say anything of the sort.

7890. He said he would be much worse off?—He said he would be worse off.

7891. Is not the implication that he will be worse off in the sense that he will have to pay more in the shape of rent than he did before?—I cannot tell you what the implication is; I can only tell you what he says in his letter.

7892. What construction do you put upon it?—That he will be worse off. He will have to pay Income Tax under three schedules and he will have to keep his buildings in repair and insure them. Those are three items of expenditure that he would not have to pay as a tenant farmer.

7893. Will not that amount to a big increase in the rental?—It will, of course, if you put it on a rental basis.

7894. It is within your knowledge, I suppose, that a great number of farmers are buying their farms?—Yes.

7895. In their words the landlords are taking advantage of war prices to sell out their farms?—No, I think the reason is that landlords have been hit so severely by the cost of labour and the interest they have received on their landed property has been so very minute that they are compelled to sell their land and put their money into investments which will bring them in four or five per cent. instead of the two or two and a-half they have got in the past.

7896. You know that very little repairs have been done to the houses and buildings during the war?—Yes, very little.

7897. If that is so how could landlords have been hit with regard to labour?—Where they have employed gardeners or footmen or other servants the cost of everything has gone up, clothes, livery and everything.

7898. Are you aware that a gardener need not be paid the minimum rate of wages?—Yes.

7899. Is it within your knowledge that many gardeners are paid as low as 20s. a week and have to pay rental out of that?—No, I pay all the gardeners the minimum wage—36s. 6d.

7900. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: How many of these cases are on your own farm?—Two

7901. Two out of the 58 labourers you employ?—Yes.

7902. You seriously put that forward as evidence that labour is deteriorating?—Yes.

7903. Two cases out of 58?—Yes.

7904. Had you any similar cases before the war in England?—No.

7905. Would it surprise you to know that farmers have been making these complaints for years before the war?—No. I learnt that from Mr. Green on the last occasion.

7906. Do you not think that it would be possible to find similar cases before the war?—Yes, if we looked for them, possibly.

7907. With regard to what Mr. Smith put to you about the men being unwilling to work and objecting to work with a slacker does not that rather counteract yours views at all?—I think I have answered that question already.

7908. To what extent does it counteract your views. Does it not have any bearing on the problem at all?—Very little, I think.

7909. *Mr. Green*: I daresay you know that during the 'eighties thousands of farmers were complaining about the deterioration of labour, and they put it all down to Mr. Joseph Arch. I suppose to-day they put it down to the trade unions. At any rate, it has been quite a common complaint from time immemorial?—Yes.

7910. *Mr. Edwards*: Have you any reason to think that the war has affected the efficiency of the agricultural labourer more than it has affected the efficiency of labourers in other spheres of work?—I am afraid the whole of my time is connected with agriculture, and I get no chance of comparing them.

7911. In order to be fair to the agricultural labourer I presume you will admit that the five years of war which we have gone through has been an absolutely abnormal period and has affected the frame of mind of the people throughout the whole country—the agricultural labourer, the farmer and all other labourers?—We are talking about labour, are we not?

7912. Yes, but I want your opinion as to whether the abnormal times through which we have gone do not in some way account for the inefficiency on the part of labour to which you have referred?—I think Mr. Smith put me through that question the other day very fully.

7913. What was the reply you gave to Mr. Smith?—I cannot remember now, it is in the printed evidence.

7914. Very well, we will leave it at that. With reference to the farmer, Mr. Tate, who wrote you the letter with regard to buying his farm, assuming for the moment that he expresses the feelings of other farmers with regard to the state of affairs after they have bought their farms, what effect do you think that will have on production in future?—A very bad effect. I think they will farm the farms as long as their capital holds out and after that the land will gradually deteriorate and then they will clear out and somebody will have the expense of cleaning the land up again and bringing it back into a proper state of cultivation.

7915. Do you think it will affect the amount of arable and grass?—As soon as the grass seed gets reasonable in price a tremendous lot of arable land will go down to grass, I think.

7916. *Mr. Duncan*: Most of the instances you have just read to us are with reference to young men, are they not?—Yes, I think that is so.

7917. What has been the experience in your district as to the comparative increase in the wages of young men as compared with those of the older men?—I do not quite follow your question.

7918. Have the wages of young men increased to a greater extent than those the older men have been getting?—They have got the increase of wages which has been set up by the Wages Board.

7919. Yes, but do young men to-day command comparatively better wages than they did before the war as compared with the older and more experienced men?—It is not a case of commanding better wages. We have to pay what we are told to pay by the Wages Board. I do not quite follow what you want to get at; if you will word your question differently I may be able to answer.

7920. What was the rate of wages before the war in your district?—18s. to 21s., and boys 10s. to 12s.

7921. Taking these young lads that you are referring to, what rate of wages would they have been getting before the war?—10s. to 12s.; if they were 18 they would be getting 15s. or 16s.

7922. They are now getting in some cases according to the instance you gave 42s., and so on?—Yes.

7923. That is comparatively a bigger increase in their wages than the married men have got during the same period of time?—Yes, a great deal more.

7924. Is it not natural to expect that the younger and more thoughtless men getting more wages are inclined to get their horns out a bit?—Yes, I should think very possibly.

7925. Is not that likely to be a temporary thing which will adjust itself in course of time?—I think if we ever get sufficient labour so that we can sack a man when we want to it will adjust itself immediately.

7926. In other words, owing to the state of the labour market at the present time, the workman is more upon an equality with the employer than he was prior to the war?—I do not know what you mean by equality.

7927. I mean you have not the same facility for sacking a man now as you had before the war?—We have not.

7928. Which means that the workman is able to stand up to his employer much more than he could before the war?—He is able to slack his work and pick and choose, if that is what you mean.

7929. And also to defend himself against his employer?—I do not think he needs to defend himself against his employer; as a rule, that is a case for the Union.

7930. Do you wish us to believe that some of the workmen in your district are unreasonable, but that farmers are never unreasonable?—No, I do not say that at all.

7931. Would it be possible, do you think, to produce as many instances of farmers treating their workmen unreasonably as if you produced workmen treating their employer unreasonably?—I could write to the Chairman of the Farmers' Union if you like and ask him.

7932. I suggest, as your evidence is collected from the other side, that you might write to the Workmen's Unions and ask them for their experience with regard to the inefficiency of the farmers who employed their members, and their inability to handle their workpeople properly?—I think I have dealt with that in my evidence before.

7933. *Mr. Dallas*: Do you not think that the inefficiency of labour to-day is caused by the low wages paid and the slackness on the part of the farmers in days gone by?—I think that certainly has helped towards it.

7934. The farmers paid their workmen a low rate of wages, and therefore did not expect a great deal out of their men, and did not get a great deal out of them, but now they have to pay higher wages they are not content with the output they are getting?—I do not think there was so much need for hustling before the war. A labourer had a better idea of passing his labour in in return for his cash.

7935. I am convinced that he gave a good return for the cash he got, but he did not get much cash?—No, he did not.

7936. My point is that whatever inefficiency there may be—and at the moment I am not saying whether there is or not—it is largely due to the fact that wages were low and employer and workmen were not screwed up to a high standard of efficiency?—I do not think it is that so much as the scarcity of labour. I think it is because the younger labourer feels that he is in a position to do more or less what he likes, and that he stands no risk of losing his employment, and possibly of not getting other employment within walking or bicycling distance of his own home. I think he knows to-day that we cannot sack him because we cannot spare him.

7937. Is that really correct?—I said I think.

7938. Only this afternoon I heard an instance of a man who left his job. He was a carman, and when he went to another employer the employer asked him if there were many applicants for his previous job, and he said nineteen?—I am very glad to hear it.

7939. So that it would show that labour is not scarce in agriculture all over the country?—I wish they would draft a few down my way.

7940. I will tell you the names afterwards?—Thank you.

7941. *Mr. Cautley*: I should like to ask you a few questions about tenants buying their farms. Did you have any experience at all of Holderness in Lincolnshire where tenant farmers bought their holdings a great deal in days gone by?—No, I have very little experience of Lincolnshire, only just of a small part of it round Spalding.

7942. I do not know your age, but I am old enough to remember the time when the tenant farmers in that district were all sold up. Bad times came along and they could not stand them. Is there not a risk that the tenant farmer who has bought his farm, especially if he has not a family behind him, will in the future not be able to stand bad times if they should happen to come along again?—I think there is every likelihood of it. The farmer has bought his farm at a dearer price to-day than he could have bought it for at any other time, I should think, during the last 40 years, and every piece of machinery he requires he has to buy at a very greatly enhanced price, and if there is any reaction in the near future in prices I think the farmer is bound to be sold up in many cases.

7943. Assuming that I have not exaggerated that risk to the tenant who has bought his holding, would not the tenant farmer in you opinion be better employed in using the capital that he puts into buying his land in increasing his yield and employing up-to-date methods so that he would be more likely to get a better return on his capital by using it as farm capital than as a land owner?—I think for the good of the country he would certainly be employing his capital much better.

7944. And in his own interest would his capital not be better so employed?—Yes, in a great many cases I think it would, because I fancy a good deal of the money that is being paid by these farmers to-day for their farms has been lent to them by banks, and is a mortgage on their farms, which, of course, will mean an extra expense to the farmer.

7945. Under the present system of English tenancies the custom is for the landlord to do the main repairs, is it not?—Yes.

7946. The tenant keeps the ditches and fences in order?—Yes, and hauls the material as a rule.

7947. The landlord finds all the material?—Yes, and the tenant hauls it.

7948. Can you tell me at all from your experience what percentage of the rental the landlords' repairs on a reasonably well managed estate form?—No, I cannot give you the percentage, but the maintenance claim which is now allowed in full by the Inland Revenue is an example of the heavy expenditure involved. They used to allow him 25 per cent. of his maintenance claim, but they now allow him the whole of it.

7949. The landlord can get back under Schedule A. the whole cost of maintenance now?—Yes, on his farms.

7950. That I understand you to say amounts to more than 25 per cent?—Yes, as the law stood it allowed 25 per cent. for some period, and then since the war I think it has been raised up to the full amount.

7951. Will all that expenditure fall on the tenant who has bought his own holding?—Yes.

7952. It will be rather a nasty thing when he wakes up to the full force of that, will it not?—Yes, if he does.

7953. Are you aware that in America people are coming back to the English system of landlord and tenant as being the best system for the proper tilling of the ground?—No, I was not aware of it.

7954. In Northamptonshire, did they have the system of the farmers of 50 up to 500 acres owning their own holdings and farming them?—I do not think that was so to any great extent in Northamptonshire. In the past Northamptonshire has been very largely a county of large landowners.

7955. You have not had any experience of a county where there has been a system of yeoman farmers, have you?—No, I have had very little experience of that.

7956. *Mr. Ashby*: I wonder if you could tell us what happened to these men to whom you have referred, who have been discharged for wilful negligence in their work?—One man that I discharged myself is now working in the gas works.

7957. Is he working efficiently there do you know?—I do not know. Since he left I have ceased to take any interest in him.

7958. Do you not think that such cases of wilful negligence are due to the fact that the men, especially the young men, have made up their minds to leave farm work and seek other work?—It may be; I cannot tell what is in their minds, of course.

7959. No, but in these cases where men get discharged for negligent work, they are as a rule, men who have gradually been going downhill and becoming casual workers, are they not?—I do not know; I have not had enough experience of it to be able to answer that question.

7960. *Dr. Douglas*: I suppose you will agree that a considerable part of what is paid as rent is interest on capital expended on equipping the land?—Yes, practically all of it I should think.

7961. Has capital invested in that way brought in a high rate of interest?—No, an abnormally low rate of interest.

7962. Is that one of the reasons which has induced landlords to sell their properties?—It is one of the reasons, certainly.

7963. So that really the comparative lowness of rent as a return on capital is inducing owners to sell their properties?—It is one of the reasons, undoubtedly.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

TENTH DAY,

WEDNESDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1919.

PRESENT:

SIR WILLIAM BARCLAY PEAT (*Chairman*).

DR. C. M. DOUGLAS, C.B.
MR. G. G. REA, C.B.E.
MR. W. ANKER SIMMONS, C.B.E.
MR. HENRY OVERMAN, O.B.E.
MR. A. W. ASHBY.
MR. A. BATCHELOR.
MR. H. S. CAUTLEY, K.C., M.P.
MR. GEORGE DALLAS.
MR. W. EDWARDS.
MR. F. E. GREEN.
MR. J. M. HENDERSON
MR. T. HENDERSON.
MR. P. JONES.
MR. E. W. LANGFORD.
MR. R. V. LENNARD.
MR. GEORGE NICHOLLS.
MR. E. H. PARKER.
MR. R. R. ROBBINS.
MR. W. R. SMITH, M.P.

SIR RICHARD WINFREY, M.P., Chairman, Norfolk and Lincoln Smallholders' Association, called and examined.

7964. *The Chairman*: You have sent in a précis of your evidence, and also some additional figures which you describe as "The actual figures of the costs of production of four crops in rotation (the 4-course system) by one of the smallholders on our Swaffham Farm"?—Yes.

7965. Will you allow me to put these in?—Yes. I want to make one correction in this. Since I sent it in I have gone over it again with the smallholder and I find that in 1919 instead of using 10 loads of farmyard manure he only used 7 loads at 5s. a load, so that that figure should be £1 15s. instead of £3. That adds 25s. to the profit in 1919.

7966. It deducts 25s. from the £15 1s. 9d.?—The total is £15 1s. 9d. and it is £1 5s. off that which reduces it to £13 16s. 9d. That makes the profit £2 9s. 3d.

7967. May I put in these statements as part of your evidence without reading them now?—Please.

Evidence in chief handed in by witness:—

7968. (1) I have been Chairman of the Lincolnshire and Norfolk Small Holdings Association for 25 years.

7969. (2) In 1894, when wheat was 25s. a quarter, we rented the first farm of Lord Lincolnshire.

The following six years, we took two other farms of Lord Lincolnshire, making a total of 972 acres, and purchased three further farms in Norfolk. Ten years ago, we leased 1,000 acres of the Crown at Wingland. We now control 2,266 acres, worked by 290 tenants, with a rent roll of £4,890.

The great majority of these tenants were agricultural labourers, and several have already retired on a competency being succeeded by their sons.

During the whole of that time, even during the bad seasons, our losses in rents, have been less than 10s. per £100.

7970. (3) The following is a summary of the Crops and live-stock for the year 1917:—

CROPS.

Crops.	Acreage. A.	R.	P.
Winter Wheat	383	2	32
Spring Wheat	12	2	—
Barley	277	1	21
Oats	293	—	12
Rye	2	2	—
Beans	99	2	7½
Peas	35	1	20
Potatoes	352	—	22
Carrots	23	2	25
Turnips and Swedes	58	2	25
Mangolds	78	3	17
Vetches or Tares, Bulbs, and White Mus	11	2	—
Soft Fruit	85	3	20
Top Fruit	28	1	—
Clover and Rotation Grasses	66	3	27
Grass for Hay	113	1	38
Grass not for Hay	332	1	16½
Total acreage	2,255	3	3

LIVE STOCK.

Horses used on the farms	174
Unbroken horses	44
Cows and heifers	121
Other cattle	285
Sheep	122
Sows kept for breeding	57
Other pigs	581
Poultry	2,457

7971. (4) I submit the following figures of the cost of growing the two main crops, wheat and potatoes, of one of the tenants on the Willow Tree Farm, Deeping Fen, Lincolnshire, for the year 1913 and the present year 1919.

The cost of team and manual labour, are those actually paid by the smallholders, who get assistance from their neighbours.

In reckoning the profits, it must, of course, be remembered, that each smallholder is charging for his own labour at current rates, and this applies to the wife, or other members of the family.

With regard to the general condition of agriculture in the Eastern Counties, I propose to point out that the increased value of agricultural land, which has gone up since 1914 from 30 per cent. (and in some cases) to 100 per cent., is, in my judgment, an infallible index of the general prosperity of the industry.

7972. (5) The three-course system on a smallholding in Deeping Fen, near Spalding.

First Year.

Potatoes, followed by wheat (then oats or barley).

Cost to Produce one acre.

	1913. £	s.	d.	1919. £	s.	d.
Tilting or light ploughing oat stubble	0	8	0	1	2	6
Harrowing and cleaning stubble	0	3	6	0	10	0
Manuring (carting 12 loads out of the yard to the heap 8 loads on to the field)	0	16	0	2	5	0
Spreading same	0	2	6	0	7	0
Value of farmyard manure	2	0	0	3	0	0
Artificial. 10 cwts. superphosphates	1	10	0	3	10	0
Seed. 15 cwt.	2	5	0	5	5	0
Ploughing 6 inches deep	0	9	0	1	7	6
Dragging twice	0	10	0	0	15	0
Hoeing down	0	1	6	0	2	6
Drawing out rows	0	3	6	0	7	0
Sowing artificial	0	2	6	0	5	0
Setting seed (2 women one day)	0	4	6	0	10	0
Ploughing in	0	3	6	0	7	0
Harrowing down	0	1	0	0	2	6
Rolling down	0	1	0	0	2	6
Skerrying (first time)	0	3	6	0	7	6
Earthing up	0	3	6	0	7	6
Harrowing down	0	1	0	0	2	6
Skerrying (second time)	0	3	6	0	7	6
Weeding (first time), piece work	0	3	0	0	7	0
Skerrying (third time)	0	3	6	0	7	6
Earthing up (second time)	0	3	6	0	7	6
Weeding (second time)	0	3	0	0	7	0
Lifting (two horses ploughing up)	0	9	0	1	10	0
Carting to grave	0	6	0	0	15	0
Nine women picking	1	0	3	2	14	0
Harrowing twice	0	2	6	0	5	0
Graving down	0	3	0	0	7	0
Earthing up graves twice	0	5	0	0	10	0
Rent	2	0	0	2	0	0
Rates	0	5	8	0	5	8
Implements, depreciation	0	5	0	0	5	0
National Insurance and Workmen's Compensation	0	2	6	0	2	6
Interest on capital	1	0	0	2	0	0
	£16	4	11	33	6	8
Add cost of dressing (10s. 6d.) *and delivery* (7s.)—*See Questions* 8193–4				0	17	6
				£34	4	2†

Yield, 1913.

	£	s.	d.
Six tons at 60s. per ton	18	0	0
Cost of production	16	4	11
Profits in 1913	£1	15	1

Yield, 1919.

	£	s.	d.
Six tons at £8 per ton (actual price made in 1918)	48	0	0
Cost of production	34	4	2†
Profit in 1919	£13	15	10†

†Corrected figure (*See* Appendix IV.)

7973. (6) *Second Year.*

Estimated cost of production of 1 acre: Wheat following potatoes.

	1913. £	s.	d.	1919. £	s.	d.
Ploughing 5 inches deep	0	9	0	1	7	6
Harrowing twice	0	2	6	0	7	0
Drilling	0	4	0	0	7	0
Harrowing seed in	0	1	0	0	2	6
Rolling	0	1	0	0	2	6
Harrowing	0	1	0	0	2	6
Horse hoeing	0	2	6	0	5	0
Weeding (first time)	0	2	6	0	7	0
Weeding (second time)	0	2	6	0	7	0
Reaping	0	5	0	0	7	6
Tying	0	8	0	0	15	0
Carting	0	15	0	2	5	0
Threshing	0	15	0	2	0	0
Coal for threshing	0	2	0	0	6	0
Carting to station	0	7	6	0	9	0
Seed corn	0	10	0	1	5	0
Rent	2	0	0	2	0	0
Rates	0	5	8	0	5	8
Depreciation of implements	0	2	0	0	3	6
National Insurance and Workmen's Compensation	0	2	6	0	2	6
Interest on capital	0	5	0	0	10	0
	£7	4	2	£13	17	2

Yield, 1913.

	£	s.	d.
4½ qrs. at £2	9	0	0
Straw at consuming value	0	10	0
	9	10	0
Less cost	7	4	2
Profit, 1913	£2	5	10

Yield, 1919.

	£	s.	d.
4½ qrs. at 75s.	16	17	6
Straw at consuming value	1	0	0
	17	17	6
Less cost	13	17	2
Profit, 1919	£4	0	4

7974. (7) *Third year*, Oat crop following Wheat.

Same charges as for Wheat, plus the first four items in the potato crop, amounting in 1913 to £1 10s., and in 1919 to £4 4s. 6d., and value of eight loads of farmyard manure (less variation in price of seed).

One acre of grass land laid down for Hay, 1919.

	£	s.	d.
Rent	2	0	0
Rates	0	5	8
Basic slag (5 cwt.)	0	17	6
Spreading same	0	1	6
Mowing	0	10	0
Making	0	15	0
Carting and stacking	1	0	0
Thatching	0	7	0
	£5	16	8

Yield.

	£	s.	d.
1½ tons of Hay at £8 per ton	12	0	0
Grazing eddish	1	0	0
	13	0	0
Less cost	5	16	8
Profit	£7	3	4

7975. I also submit the following actual figures of the costs of production of four crops in rotation (the 4-course system) by one of the smallholders on our Swaffham farm, which is exceedingly light land, showing that the increased price, far exceeds the enhanced cost of production.

(8) *First Year.*

One acre of Wheat following seeds.

	1913. £ s. d.	1919. £ s. d.
7 loads farmyard manure ...	1 10 0	1 15 0*
Spreading	0 2 6	0 7 0
Ploughing 5″ deep	0 10 0	1 5 0
4 cwts basic slag		0 14 0†
1 cwt. sulphate ammonia	0 10 0	
Harrowing twice	0 3 0	0 6 0
Drilling	0 2 6	0 5 6
Harrowing seed in	0 1 6	0 3 0
Rolling	0 1 6	0 3 0
Harrowing	0 1 6	0 3 0
Weeding (first time) 2 women	0 1 6	0 5 0
Ditto (second time) ,,	0 1 6	0 5 0
Reaping	0 8 0	1 0 0
Carting	0 10 0	1 10 0
Threshing	0 10 0	1 10 0
Coal	0 2 0	0 6 0
Carting to merchants	0 1 9	0 5 3
Seed corn	0 12 0	1 5 0
Rent	1 11 6	1 11 6
Rates	0 1 0	0 1 6
Depreciation of implements ...	0 2 6	0 3 6
National Insurance and Workmen's Compensation	0 2 6	0 2 6
Interest on capital	0 5 0	0 10 0
	£7 11 9	£13 16 9

Yield, 1913.

	£ s. d.
4 qrs. at £2 per qr.	8 0 0
Straw at consuming value	0 12 0
	8 12 0
Less cost	7 11 9
Profit	£1 0 3

Yield, 1919.

	£ s. d.
4 qrs. at 75s. 6d. per qr.	15 2 0
Straw at consuming value	1 4 0
	16 6 0
Less cost	13 16 9*
Profit	£2 9 3*

7976. (9) *Second Year.*

Roots—Mangolds, following Wheat

	1913. £ s. d.	1919. £ s. d.
Tilting or light ploughing wheat stubble	0 10 0	1 5 0
Cleaning	0 3 6	0 8 0
Ploughing 6″ deep	0 6 8	1 0 0
Ridging and splitting down ...	0 0 10	0 2 6
10 loads farmyard manure ...	1 10 0	3 0 0
Rolling	0 1 6	0 3 0
Drilling	0 1 6	0 3 0
Thinning out and scoring ...	0 7 6	1 1 0
Horse-hoeing (three times) ...	0 5 0	0 11 0
Lifting	0 4 4	0 12 0
Carting	0 4 4	0 12 0
Graving and earthing down ...	0 1 6	0 4 6
Rent	1 11 6	1 11 6
Rates	0 1 0	0 1 6
Depreciation of implements ...	0 2 6	0 3 6
National Insurance and Workmen's Compensation	0 2 6	0 2 6
Seed (6 lbs.)	0 3 6	0 12 0
Interest on capital	0 6 0	0 12 0
	£6 3 8	£12 5 0

Yield, 1913.

	£ s. d.
15 tons at 10s.	7 10 0
Cost	6 3 8
Profit	£1 6 4

Yield, 1919.

	£ s. d.
15 tons at £1 per ton	15 0 0
Cost	12 14 6
Profit	£2 5 6

7977. (10) *Third Year.*

One acre of Barley following Mangolds.

	1913. £ s. d.	1919. £ s. d.
Ploughing, 5″ deep	0 10 0	1 5 0
3 cwts. artificial barley manure, (not used in 1913)		1 5 6
Harrowing (twice)	0 2 6	0 5 0
Drilling	0 2 6	0 5 6
Harrowing in	0 1 6	0 3 0
Rolling	0 1 6	0 3 0
Weeding (first time—2 women)	0 1 6	0 6 0
Do. (second time—2 do.) ...	0 1 6	0 5 0
Reaping	0 8 0	1 0 0
Carting	0 10 0	1 10 0
Threshing	0 10 0	1 10 0
Coal	0 2 0	0 6 0
Carting to merchants	0 1 9	0 5 3
Seed corn (3 bushels)	0 11 3	1 6 3
Rent	1 11 6	1 11 6
Rates	0 1 0	0 1 6
Depreciation of Implements ...	0 2 6	0 3 6
National Insurance and Workmen's Compensation	0 2 6	0 2 6
Interest on Capital	0 6 0	0 12 0
	£5 7 6	£12 5 6

Yield, 1913. (Very dry year.)

	£ s. d.
4½ Qrs. at 29s. per Qr.	6 10 6
Cost	5 7 6
Profit	£1 3 0

Yield, 1919.

	£ s. d.
4½ Qrs. at 90s. per Qr.	20 5 0‡
Cost	12 5 6
Profit	£7 19 6

7978. (11) *Fourth Year.*

Grass Land laid for Hay, following Barley.

	1913. £ s. d.	1919. £ s. d.
Rent	1 11 6	1 11 6
Rates	0 1 0	0 1 6
Seed (2 pecks)	0 9 0	1 10 2†
Mowing	0 5 0	0 10 0
Making	0 2 6	0 5 0
Carting and stacking	0 7 6	0 15 0
Thatching	0 2 0	0 4 0
	£2 18 6	£4 17 2
Add cost of getting second crop	0 10 0	0 17 0†
	£3 8 6†	£5 14 2

Yield, 1913.

	£ s. d.
1½ tons at £5 per ton	7 10 0
¼ ton (second crop)	3 15 0
	11 5 0
Cost	3 8 6†
Profit	£7 16 6†

Yield, 1919.

	£ s. d.
1½ tons at £8	12 0 0
¼ ton (2nd crop)	6 0 0
	18 0 0
Cost	5 14 2†
Profit	£12 5 10†

* *Figures corrected in course of evidence.* † *Corrected figure. See Appendix IV.*

‡ *Corrected figures. See Question* 8060.

Summary of Profits.

	1913. £ s. d.	1919. £ s. d.
1st year—wheat	1 4 3	1 7 3
2nd year—mangolds	1 6 4	2 15 0
3rd year—barley	1 3 0	6 19 6
4th year—hay seeds	8 6 6	13 15 6
	4)12 0 1	4)24 17 3
Average profit per acre ...	£3 0 0	£6 4 4

(*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*)

7979. *Dr. Douglas*: I am only going to ask certain general questions. I will leave the question of the cost of operations, and so on, to those who are more familiar with your district. You are a strong believer in the productive value of small holdings, are you not?—I am.

7980. You consider the production per man on a small holding higher than is the case on a large holding?—Certainly.

7981. Do you think the labour is superior?—I do. Shall I particularise?

7982. By all means?—On one of these estates that I am Chairman of, where we have 1,000 acres of Crown land, that was previously occupied by one farmer who employed ten regular labourers; he had ten cottages and a small amount of casual labour. We now have 39 families getting a good living off that estate in addition to some of the land which is let in allotments to those living around the district.

7983. Yes, but my question was, and I think you answered it in the affirmative, whether you thought that the labour per man was more productive on small holdings than on large holdings?—I do, because they work longer and they work harder.

7984. So that the cost of production so far as labour is concerned would be greater on large holdings than on small ones?—Quite.

7985. You think labour is more efficient on the small holdings?—I do.

7986. Will you please tell us exactly how these statements are arrived at in the second and third sub-paragraphs of your paragraph 4. You say: "In reckoning the profits it must of course be remembered that each small holder is charging for his own labour at current rates, and this applies to the wife and other members of the family?—Yes.

7987. Does that mean that an account was kept at the time and all the labour charged at these rates?—I sat down with this man and he told me that he had kept the cost of his own labour, and these were the charges which he also made when he assisted his neighbours.

7988. He kept these accounts at the time?—He did.

7989. Have you got the figures of the rate charged for labour?—The rate charged in 1913 was 3s. a day for himself.

7990. For how long a day?—I could not say that.

7991. It is an important point, is it not?—This was in 1913 and I could not say.

7992. Do you know what it was in 1919?—In 1919 the charge was 7s. a day.

7993. Have you any record of the length of that 7s. day?—I think I am right in saying it was from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an hour and a half for meal times.

7994. That is 8½ hours?—Yes, and no half holiday on Saturday there—not at present. Then the wife's wages were 2s. a day in 1913 and in 1919 5s. a day.

7995. The day being of similar length?—Yes.

7996. So that that works out for a man about 10d. an hour?—Yes, it is upon that basis that these figures are computed.

7997. And for woman about 7d.?—Yes.

7998. When overtime was worked no special charge was made?—No.

7999. To go down to the next paragraph, potatoes, the charge for farmyard manure is for 12 loads out of the yard, £3, that is 5s. a load in 1919?—Yes.

8000. Is that the normal price at the present moment?—I put it to them, and they thought that was a fair price, and that is exactly the same price as the small holder thought it was valued at in Norfolk. I saw him next day without telling him what the Lincolnshire man had said, and he put the same value on it—5s. a load.

8001. Do you think that is the actual value of it either in relation to purchased manures or in relation to market prices?—Yes, I think so.

8002. On what basis is your interest on capital charged? You do not charge an overhead interest on the holding; you charge different rates for different crops?—I took the potato crop—that was of course my own working out—as costing £16 4s. 11d. to produce, and I took the interest on that practically a little over, and I did the same with the other.

8003. In paragraph (7) you give without working it out in detail the cost of the third year oat crop following wheat?—Yes.

8004. Is that a fairly normal order of cropping in the district?—It is in Deeping Fen.

8005. You say it is the same charges as for wheat?—Yes.

8006. What is the wheat figure now, after the correction you gave us this morning?—The correction was with regard to the Norfolk figures; you are now on the Lincolnshire figures.

8007. Then Nos. 6 and 7 are correct?—Yes.

8008. The wheat charge in paragraph (4) is £13 17s. 2d., to which you add £4 4s. 6d., being the first four items in the potato crop?—Yes.

8009. To that you add £3 for dung?—Yes.

8010. Making per acre of oats £21 1s. 8d., less variation in the price of seeds. What is that variation? Does your oat seeding cost less than 25s. an acre?—It costs a little less than the wheat.†

8011. Does it cost less than 25s. an acre?—What do we put in for wheat?

8012. 25s. I am talking of 1919?—Yes, £1 5s. I could not say what would be exactly the difference between the seeding of an acre of oats and the seeding of an acre of wheat.

8013. I put it to you it would at all events not be less than 25s., and it would probably be a good deal more. Seed oats would need to be reckoned, would they not, at somewhere not less than 8s. a bushel. The controlled price for feeding oats was 6s. a bushel, and seed oats would be higher than that?—Yes. I think you are right.

8014. Seeding oats would be substantially more than that. Four bushels would be low seeding for oats, would it not?—These men buy their seeds from one another as a rule; they do not go and buy the best seed.

8015. Do they take less than market price from one another?—No, they take the 6s.; I think that would be a fair price.

8016. That would bring it out at 1s. less if you had only four bushels to the acre, which I think you would agree would be a low seeding?—Yes; that would be £1 4s.

8017. There is a reduction of 1s. on that, and the total cost of oats is therefore £21 0s. 8d?—Yes. That is the most expensive crop of the year, because it is then followed by the wheat crop.

8018. If that crop is to stand by itself, and if you indicate a separate profit on each crop, it means a very high cost of production, does it not?—It does.

8019. Have you stated the yield of oats at all?—No, I have not done that, I am afraid I did not go into the oat crop as thoroughly as I went into the potatoes and wheat.

8020. I am just taking the figures that you have given us?—Yes, quite.

8021. The next crop that you give is a crop of grass land laid down for hay in 1919?—Yes.

8022. When was that laid down—when was it sown? It was permanent grass.

8023. Then it was not laid down?—No, it should have been "One acre of permanent grass laid down for hay."

8024. Had that no manuring, except 5 cwt. of basic slag? That is so.

8025. No dung?—No.

8026. No nitrogen?—No.

8027. This yield is very high for a crop which has had practically no manure?—That is the estimate he has made.

8028. Has that estimate been checked?—No. I saw the hay stack; he mowed 3 acres and he reckons he has got 4½ tons.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

8029. That is only an estimate by looking at it?—It is an estimate by looking at the stack; it has not been sold.

8030. A considerable error may arise by estimating from mere appearance a stack of this year's hay?—I find these men know pretty accurately what they have got.

8031. I suppose you will agree that very great over estimates have sometimes been formed even by skilled men of the amount of hay they have had for disposal during the last few years?—Yes.

8032. That has been the experience of the Forage Committee, has it not?—I daresay, but this man is an extremely careful man, one of the most careful men I know, and I do not think he would exaggerate.

8033. In the case of wheat following seeds how long do you suppose these seeds have been down?—Now you are going on to Norfolk.

8034. Yes?—That of course is a four course system. The seeds are sown with the barley and then they are mown the next year; that is the system in Norfolk.

8035. So that some part of the seeds cropped would really fall to be debited against that year of wheat, would it not?—I do not follow that.

8036. There would be a considerable residue from the seeds that have been down one year, would there not?—Yes.

8037. *Mr. Rea*: You say you have 2,266 acres divided among 290 tenants?—Yes.

8038. That is an average of about 7¾ per man?—Yes.

8039. Do they devote themselves entirely to this work?—You must not take the average like that because on each farm we have let some land in allotments of 1 acre, 2 acres and 3 acres, to people who are residing in the neighbourhood. The resident tenants have ranged from 20 to 30 acres, those for whom we have houses.

8040. These other allotment holders follow other occupations?—They do.

8041. Are they included in the 39 families that I think you said were in these holdings?—No, in that 39 families on the Crown farm the Crown have built us houses for every one of them. We have 39 houses now upon the estate.

8042. Independent of the allotment holders houses?—Yes, quite independent of them.

8043. What is the highest rent per acre? The average rent works out to 43s. an acre?—The highest rent for some of the grass land goes up to about 50s. and the lowest rent—we vary the rents according to the quality of the land—goes down as low as £1 and 25s.

8044. Do the allotment holders, whose land I suppose is really held for accommodation land, pay 50s., the maximum?—Yes, we make no difference in their case.

8045. These men who do carry on farming as their sole occupation assist each other on the different holdings?—They do.

8046. Have they any system of co-operation by way of purchasing implements and machinery, and so on?—Not for the purchase of implements and machinery, but on this Wingland estate we have a co-operative trading society which I started ten years ago, and this co-operative trading society buys and sells for them manures and cotton cakes, and so on. We also have a mill for grinding their corn, and there we grow a considerable amount of fruit in addition. We have now more than 100 acres under fruit on the farm, and this trading society deals with all the fruit and sends it to the co-operative wholesale society.

8047. Of course each man will not have work for a pair of horses?—No. Of course those that have not got horses get their horses from their neighbours at a certain charge.

8048. Can they get them when they want them? May not they have their land ready for sowing and not have horses to carry out the operation?—They do get them, but there is no doubt the man who has his own horseflesh comes off best, he has the command of them first, but he turns round and helps his neighbour and there is no practical difficulty about it.

8049. They work it out amongst themselves?—They do.

8050. In paragraph (6), with reference to wheat after potatoes, I see you put down two weedings. Is that customary after potatoes?—Good farmers do that.

8051. You put the cost of both weedings at the same price. I should have thought that in the case of the second weeding there would not be so much to do, and that the cost therefore would not be so high?—It only means a day's work.

8052. Still it amounts to 7s. an acre?—Yes.

8053. The two could not be of equal value. How do they manage the reaping and tying of their corn? Do they do it by manual labour mostly?—No, many of them have self-binders now. I am sorry I did not get out the number of implements like we did with regard to the live stock. We have at least ten or a dozen self-binders. One man will invest in a self-binder and let it out to his friends.

8054. You have put two separate items, reaping 7s. 6d. and tying 15s.?—Yes, this particular man has not a self-binder.

8055. He does it with a manual reaper?—Yes.

8056. In paragraph (8), with regard to Norfolk, in the estimate of production of wheat you have got down 4 cwt. of basic slag, 1 cwt. of ammonia, and spreading 14s.?—Yes.

8057. That, surely, must be an error? Four cwt. of basic slag would cost at least 16s., and 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia 15s., and the spreading would be over and above that?—I am not quite sure whether the word "or" should not be in there. I have not got my original notes here.

8058. You mean it is an alternative, 4 cwt. of basic slag or 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia?—Yes, I think that is it, but, as I say, I have not got my original notes here.

8059. In any case, the cost of that is rather low?—I think that is the explanation of it.

8060.† In the barley crop in that same rotation you have taken in 1913, which was a very dry year, 4½ quarters at 29s. a quarter, £6 10s. 6d., less cost £5 7s. 6d., leaving a profit of £1 3s.; and in 1919 you have taken the yield at 5½ quarters at 70s. a quarter, £19 5s., less cost £12 5s. 6d., leaving a profit of £6 19s. 6d., and you deduct from that that the prices of the produce have more than counterbalanced the increased cost of production?—Yes, that is so.

8061. Do you think that it is fair to add on a quarter in 1919 and charge £3 10s. for it?—These are the actual figures that this Swaffham smallholder gave me, and I took them down naturally without any addition or subtraction. He considers he has got 5½ quarters this year, and he only had 4½ quarters in 1913.

8062. Do you think that is fair?—That is for the Commission to decide; if they like to take one quarter off they will do so.

8063. What is the normal or average yield do you know?—Of barley?

8064. Yes?—I think this is quite a low yield for Norfolk; this is very light land indeed which cost us less than £20 an acre.

8065. On this particular land would you take 4½ or 5 or 5½ quarters as an average crop?—I take 5 as an average—that is the average of these two years.

8066. I submit to you that would be a fairer way to get at the difference of cost?—You would put five quarters for 1913 and five quarters for 1919.

8067. Yes, that seems to be a fairer way to get at the difference?—Yes.

8068. Are most of these figures estimated or actual yields?—These are actual yields.

8069. The mangolds in 1919 will not be lifted yet?—No; that of course is an estimate.

8070. Is 15 tons about a fair average crop?—It is for this land.

8071. You state that the land has increased in value from 30 per cent. to 100 per cent.?—It has.

8072. Is that in rentals?—Both in rentals and in sales.

8073. Do you mean that landlords have actually increased the rents to sitting tenants?—I will give you a case of a farm in Fleet near Holbeach of 174 acres. The farmer has a lease for 14 years which expired in 1908 at £420 a year. The farmer was then granted a new lease for 7 years at £560 a year. That lease expired in 1915 during the war. He was then

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

permitted to continue as a yearly tenant at £660 a year. Last Michaelmas he had notice to quit and the farm has been let for £880 a year.

8074. Was it very low rented formerly?—I should not think so—£420 a year for 14 years expiring in 1908. It was let during the bad times and there are only 174 acres, so that it was not a very low rent; it was over 50s. an acre then.

8075. I suppose it was very good land or there was something exceptional about it?—It is fair south Lincolnshire land which is now being sold at £100 an acre and which sold in pre-war days at £50 an acre.

8076. Is it in a potato growing area?—Yes. A sale took place last week. I have the particulars here taken out of the present issue of the Lincolnshire Free Press of the Allenby Estates which have been in the Allenby family for 200 years. It is in my own native parish. Several lots of land made more than £100 an acre. This is in the Fen district. Lot 21, 12 acres one rood of arable land near the Star Inn at Tydd Fen, six miles from a railway station, made £1,300. I venture to say that is twice the price it would have made in 1912.

8077. It is very good land I take it?—It is good land; it is Lincolnshire land. Lot 1 on Lady Montagu's Estate which was also sold the same day and which I know quite well, of 9 acres one rood in the Middle Drove, Gedney, sold for £900. The whole Estate made £43,000, 100 per cent. more than it would have made before the war.

8078. Of course, we all know that much land is selling at a greatly increased price?—Yes. That is my confirmation of the 100 per cent increase in value. Of course you have many instances of the 50 per cent. increase, but there is a case of land that is making 100 per cent. more than it would have done in pre-war times, and I say that is a infallible index of the great prosperity of the agricultural industry.

8079. On the whole do these smallholders bring fairly enlightened methods to bear on their system of cultivation and management or is the labour what you might call wastefully employed owing to not having sufficiency of the right number of implements and other things necessary for the various operations?—I find that these smallholders keep up to date in regard to implements. If I have any fault to find with the Lincoln tenant farmers it is that they do not go in for a sufficient variety of crops; they follow the old system of cropping and do not go in quite sufficiently for catch crops. You will see that from the list of things grown on these 2,000 acres.

8080. You told us that they had to wait on one another for horses, and that sort of thing?—They all stack in a common stackyard and they agree amongst themselves whose corn shall be led first. Then they all set to and lead John Smith's or Bob Brown's, or whoever it may be, in the rotation that is agreed upon and it is all stacked in a common stackyard. They co-operate in leading, and threshing more than in anything, I think.

8081. Do you consider from an economic point of view that the output under the present system is as great as it would be if this land were divided into perhaps two large farms with more machinery and so on. Is the output, considering the number of men employed, as great as the output would be if it were in large farms instead of smallholdings?—You mean in the way of the production of food?

8082. Yes. Of course with regard to these three Lincolnshire farms of Lord Lincolnshire's which we took over 25 years ago—it is no secret now so I am able to mention it—two of the farmers were bankrupt and owed Lord Lincolnshire a good deal of rent which he forgave them and let their farms to our Association. We have carried them on for 25 years from 1894 when wheat was 25s. a quarter and we have never had a single failure. We have always paid our rent punctually except on one occasion. That was in the year 1912 which was a disastrously wet year. On that occasion we got 10 per cent. reduction. Now we have a flourishing colony of smallholders several of whom have retired and made way for their sons.

8083. Do you look upon this as an economic proposition, from the national standpoint of producing the greatest amount of food in the most economical way or do you look upon it rather as a means of effecting the end of keeping people on the land?—I think both. I think certainly in the whole of this area of south Lincolnshire if you were to have huge systems of smallholdings such as these you would increase the population and also increase the food.

8084. Per acre per man?—Per acre.

8085. With the first proposition I agree, but not with the second?—I think you would increase the population. We have increased the population there, I am glad to say. The census shows that.

8086. *Mr. Overman*: I will not touch much upon the Lincolnshire evidence you have put before us. I will leave that to those who are more used to potato growing than I am, but I want to go very carefully with you through your Norfolk figures. There are just one or two points on the evidence from Lincolnshire that I want to ask a question or two about. The total acreage is 2,255?—Yes.

8087. The grass for hay is permanent grass?—Yes.

8088. You deduct from the 2,255 acres 445 acres under grass and that leaves you a total of 1,810 acres under the plough?—That is so.

8089. You say these smallholders have to wait for their horse teams and those sort of things at certain periods of the year to hire them from the men who own the horses?—Yes, quite.

8090. I see you have 174 horses on the farms?—Yes.

8091. How many horses to the 100 acres is it customary to have? 174 would be about 10 horses to the 100 acres?—Then they do not have to wait about very much you see.

8092. I should think not, but you said they would have to wait?—No, not much. I said they help one another.

8093. With 10 horses to the 100 acres you could not plough the land for £1 2s. 6d. an acre, and your cost of horse flesh must be enormous?—The man who gave me this evidence has 18 acres of arable land and six acres of grass. It is a 24 acre holding and he keeps a pair of horses. He does his own 18 acres and he helps other people, and this is what he charges.

8094. I am taking your schedule of 1,810 acres on which are kept 174 horses used on the farms, and I am putting to you that that represents an average of very nearly 10 horses per 100 acres?—Yes.

8095. Do you accept that?—Yes, that is absolutely true; it is correct, and I accept it because this is a census which was made not for the purposes of this Commission—it was made in 1917.

8096. Of course the quantity of stock and sheep are small on these Lincolnshire lands compared with potato growing, and naturally so?—Yes, quite.

8097. Do the smallholders show no inclination to increase the quantity of dairy cattle at all at these times, with the prospect of milk being short?—No, I find not. You see they are a long way from the market. I find that the number of cows has rather decreased than increased.

8098. Dr. Douglas touched on the question of labour on your smallholdings. You say that in reckoning profits each smallholder charges the current rate of wages, 7s. a day, for his labour?—This man whom I interviewed the other day has charged exactly what he charges any other smallholder when he goes and works for him, 7s. a day for his labour.

8099. He does not charge the overtime that he puts in on his smallholding in the evenings?—No.

8100. He does not stop at 54 hours?—No, but in return for that he has all his milk and his poultry and his pigs. That is all done in his overtime.

8101. Taking your wheat crop in Lincolnshire, do not they ever thatch the crops in Lincolnshire. I see there is no change down here for thatching?—There is some thatching done, but not a great deal. They thresh as soon as they can after harvest. I daresay in the case of this man he never does any thatching.†

8102. But the cost of thatching should be accounted for if any thatching is done even in Lincolnshire?—I should say this man in nine cases out of ten threshes as soon after harvest as he possibly can.

8103. This weather looks at the present moment as if he ought to thatch his crops?—They put a stack cover over them for a few weeks and get the engine into the yard as soon as they can and thresh.

8104. In the oat crop you admit that Dr. Douglas's figures are correct—that it costs £21 0s. 8d. in Lincoln-

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

shire to grow?—If you follow this rotation it does. Of course, if you grow the oats after potatoes—and they do sometimes grow oats after potatoes instead of after wheat—then, of course, those first four items do not come in. Those first four items have to be brought in two years out of the three, you see.

8105. Is this particular holding surrounded by a fence or a ditch?—Both. The grass land we fenced off. This man has six acres of grass; that is fenced off. They were most of them about 20 acre fields. He would have a third of the field and the others were all ditches and each man has to keep his ditches clear.

8106. To what crop do you charge what we call the unprofitable labour of cleaning out these ditches, which is a very necessary thing in Lincolnshire, or trimming the fences?—If this man had to rely absolutely on these three crops it would be different, but you must remember he has his stock and his pigs and his poultry and butter and eggs. I think I may say almost that his wife has paid the rent of this place practically out of the poultry and eggs during the war.

8107. Yes, but do you not think that something should be charged to the wheat crop for keeping the ditches clean, which must be cleaned every year, and for putting the fences in order. It has to be charged to some crop or another?—What we do with regard to the ditches on this farm, which is a long narrow farm, two miles long, is this: the whole of the ditches are put in order by the Association, and each man is charged his share of the cost per acre whatever it may be. The men do the work; the Steward goes down and tells six of them, say, to start the ditching, and he pays them the rate of wages and the total cost is divided amongst them all when the rent is paid. It is not in the cost of these crops certainly.

8108. It ought to be?—It ought to be taken off the whole profit of the whole of it, but this is not the whole profit of the whole of it.

8109. Yes, but in taking out estimates of this sort you must allocate these charges to the particular crops in proportion?—In proportion, yes, but it would be a very small proportion.

8110. However, it is a proportion?—Yes.

8111. In the grass land laid down for hay in 1919, is there anything for seeds?—I said it ought to be one acre of permanent grass laid down for hay: the word "permanent" was omitted.

8112. I had not got that. Will you now turn to Norfolk; this is very light land as you and I know?—Yes.

8113. Is it on the south side of Swaffham this particular side of the holding?—No, it is on the Watton road.

8114. To the south?—No, it lies between the Watton road and the Brandon road.

8115. That is due south?—Yes.

8116. Take your estimate for growing wheat first of all. You have put down 10 loads of farmyard manure. That you say ought to be 7?—Yes.

8117. There is nothing charged for carting that?—No. Of course, this man lives on his holding—the land is all round his house—so that his carting would be very little. I do not know whether he includes it in the 5s. a load.

8118. He has to put it on to the cart and take it to the field in a cart?—Quite.

8119. So that is an omission. Then with regard to the artificials. Mr. Rea has made the point that even if it should be only one item, 4 cwts. of basic slag or 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia, 14s. is inadequate?—This man says 14s., and you say it ought to be 16s.; it is 2s. out.†

8120. And spreading?—Yes.

8121. Again there is nothing there for thatching?—No. I should very much question whether this man ever thatches.

8122. He has to cover it up with something?—As I say, he covers it up with a cloth until such time as he gets the threshing machine into the yard.

8123. Last year the War Agricultural Committee of Norfolk were searching out the people who did not thatch?—They did not catch any of the little men.

8124. Yes, they caught little men as well as big men?—All I can say is none of my smallholders were caught.

8125. You were lucky. Now turn to the yield: do you think that the average yield on that particular smallholding—I know the land well—is 4 quarters of wheat to the acre on light land such as that is, taking a cycle of years?—We have had this farm since 1900—that is 19 years—no, I honestly do not think that during the whole of the 19 years if you struck an average that they have got 4 quarters, but I think this man does, because in my opinion he is one of the best of them.

8126. Would you be surprised to know that a man to the south of him, whose land may not perhaps be as good land although it is all pretty much on a par, has only got an average yield for the last six years of 21¼ bushels?—There is a lot of land which is overridden with game there, and which has only really been scratched over and not farmed at all. The crops are eaten up by the game, and I should like to know what parish it is in before I can answer your question. If it is in South Pickenham, where it is overrun with game, it would of course be a very small crop.

8127. Now if you will turn to the roots, the charge for ridging is 2s. 6d. No doubt it is double ridging. Have you any idea what a man with a pair of horses can run up and split down in the day?—I should think getting on for three acres.

8128. That is only 7s. 6d. for a pair of horses and a man?—They do not use a pair of horses on this land very often.

8129. Then they would not do three acres?—No.

8130. I put it to you I can very rarely get two acres done, run up and split down?—That shows the advantage of smallholdings, because this man gets it done cheaper than you do.

8131. He does not charge his labour, that is all I can say. It is such an absurd figure that it puts your figures completely out of Court. He cannot do it under five times the amount. It proves the fallacy of the whole report?—That is your view, not mine.

8132. You have not had much experience as a practical agriculturist?—I have had 25 years carefully watching these people.

8133. With regard to the yield, I should think your estimate of 15 tons of mangolds is about correct?—Are there any other items that you dispute?

8134. No?—If it is only the ridging, I dare say you are right about that.

8135. Now barley. You have charged ploughing 5 inches deep at 25s.?—Yes.

8136. If you turn back to the roots again, you charge ploughing 6 inches deep, £1—that is the second year roots?—Yes.

8137. There must be an error there I take it?—Yes.

8138. These must be estimates?—Yes; that does not work out.

8139. Then we will come to the workmen's compensation. You charge 2s. 6d. in 1919, the same as you charge in 1913, both in Norfolk and in Lincolnshire. The premiums for workmen's compensation have risen 100 per cent. since 1913?—These men do not insure themselves.

8140. They do not insure themselves under the Workmen's Compensation Act?—No.

8141. You have put down "Workmen's compensation"?—That is just the casual labour they have from time to time.

8142. The premiums cost considerably more now than they did in 1913?—Yes.

8143. With regard to the yields, do you think that Swaffham land can grow 5½ quarters of barley in this very deplorable year that we have had. It is not threshed yet, I take it?—No.

8144. It is only an estimate then?—Yes, but it is a very good crop on this land; it is much above the average.

8145. I can assure you that the whole of Norfolk will not average 4 quarters this year?—Of course, but when you take the whole of Norfolk you take some very poor land with it.

8146. This is not very valuable land?—When Mr. Gooding was giving evidence here he said the cost of producing barley was £8 17s. 3d., whereas this man's estimate is £12 5s .6d., so if you take the average yield you must take the average cost. I am giving you the

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

actual figures of what this smallholder reckons it costs him.

8147. Yes, but I am asking you whether this man ever did grow 5¼ quarters?

8148. Yes, of barley, certainly; that is an extremely good barley farm, as you know.

8149. You are putting 5 as the average. I take it—4¼ in 1913 and 5¼ in 1919. Do you really think that farm will average 5 quarters to the acre?—Yes, I think so; that is one quarter above the average for Norfolk.

8150. Now, turn to the grass land laid down for hay—that is the fourth year?—Yes.

8151. Seed, 2 pecks, 17s. 6d.?—Yes.

8152. Have you any idea yourself of what grass seeds cost this year?—No I have not.

8153. Would it surprise you to know that it is impossible to buy 2 pecks of small seeds under £2?—Yes, it would surprise me if this man has not given me the actual figures of what it cost him.

8154. I am certain he has not, because it is an impossibility to buy 2 pecks of small seeds and sow a crop which will return you a ton and a half of hay for 17s. 6d. I expect what he means is a peck of heavy and a peck of light 16 lbs. to the peck of heavy seed. That is the custom in Norfolk. Have you anything to say on that?—No, I cannot carry that any further. That is what he told me. I have always looked upon him as a truthful man, and I was very anxious that he should not either exaggerate or extenuate. I will raise that point with him again certainly.†

8155. Is the ton and a half of hay—the yield given for this year—an estimate, or has it been measured in the stack?—No, it is an estimate; he has not sold any yet—in fact, I think he is going to consume it himself; this man keeps cows.

8156. You know we never had a drop of rain in June this year?—Yes.

8157. I should not think there was a ton of hay an acre grown on any field in Norfolk this year?—He says a ton and a half, and he puts it at £8 a ton. That is what he considered the value to him. If he sold it I suppose he would get £10 a ton for it to-day or even more.

8158. I wish I could bring myself to believe that these figures are accurate ones and not estimates. I should then have more belief in your belief in the future prosperity of agriculture?—I am sorry to hear you take that view. I have no doubt about it myself.

8159. No doubt about the figures?—I have no doubt about the prosperity of agriculture.

8160. We all hope you are correct?—I have never been so convinced as to its future prosperity as I have been since consulting with bank managers and other people and hearing that agriculturists have been able to pay off their mortgages and have got credits at the bank such as they have never had before in my time.

8161. What size do you say this particular smallholding in Swaffham is?—I think he has about 24 acres, but I am not quite sure. He has some other land that he hires. I am not sure whether the whole of the 24 acres belongs to us or not, but I think it is a 24-acre holding.

8162. I am sure you wish to give us every help you can in this matter?—I do.

8163. I should like when this crop is threshed for you to give us proof positive of what these things come to?—Yes, I will do that if only for my own sake.

8164. And also with regard to these few other matters that I have picked out, if you will go into them and give us the details. If you find there has been a mistake we will give you an opportunity of correcting it. I think there must be some mistake?—Yes. I will just make a note of the various points. First of all you raise the question of the basic slag——

8165. You need not trouble to take a note of it; it will all be in the evidence. I am afraid I differ from you very much as regards these costings. We are only out for the truth?—Quite. I notice that when Mr. Gooding, who represents the Norfolk Farmers' Union, gave evidence here he said that the cost of growing an acre of wheat was £11 4s. 4d. I put it at £13 16s. 9d. He also said that the cost of growing an acre of barley was £8 17s. 3d. I have put it at £12 5s. 6d., so that I am considerably higher in my costings than the representative of the Norfolk Farmers' Union, and so far as yield is concerned I am higher, and I say that the smallholder does better than the big man. If you drive over Norfolk you can see it for yourself.

8166. Have you been to Whissonsette recently?—No, not this season, but I have been to Watton not very long ago. I visited a man there who went in in 1900 on a 30-acre holding. His capital was so small then that I had to trust him for two years for the inventory That man has now taken a 200-acre farm.

8167. I should like you to go down to Whissonsette and have a look at the smallholders' farms there as you are so convinced that smallholdings increase production. Do not think for a moment that I am in any way against smallholdings, but you have said that smallholdings do greatly increase the production in Norfolk on the land that has been taken for smallholdings. I can only advise you to go and look at the Whissonsette smallholdings?—You may find some bad farmers there.

8168. I am taking them as a whole. I do not wish to reflect for a moment upon your smallholdings at Swaffham. I believe that your Swaffham holdings are farmed well. I wish to make that statement at once?—Thank you.

8169. *Mr. Batchelor*: Can you tell us how many acres are under allotments and how many are occupied by the smallholders?—No, I could not tell that offhand, but, roughly, I think I might say that there are about 200 acres which are let in small plots ranging from 1 acre to 3.

8170. Are these smallholdings, so far as the purchases, say, of manures are concerned, wrought as one? Does the Association buy the manures for the whole of the smallholdings?—No.

8171. They buy them all individually, do they?—We have no trading society in Lincolnshire as we have in Norfolk. The trading society that we have in Norfolk does buy the manure in the bulk and sell it out to the smallholder a sack at a time, or whatever quantity he requires.

8172. In Lincolnshire each smallholder purchases his own manure?—Yes.

8173. That adds to the cost of manure as compared with the large farm?—No. Our trading society buys their manure mostly from the West Norfolk Farmers' Manure Company at Lynn.

8174. I am dealing with the Lincolnshire smallholders; they buy their manure individually?—Yes.

8175. If you buy in small quantities you are charged a higher rate than if you buy in large quantities?—Yes, I suppose they do lose a little in that way, but they are keen buyers.

8176. I have no doubt the sellers are very keen sellers?—Yes.

8177. Will you turn to paragraph (4), the costs of team and manual labour. Are those actually paid by the smallholders?—Will you tell me what the cost of team and manual labour is per day?—I have given you the manual labour.

8178. Yes. Will you give us the team labour?—I, unfortunately, did not bring those figures with me; I must supply them.†

8179. Thank you. Now will you go to potatoes in the next paragraph? The only artificial manure is 10 cwt. of superphosphates?—There is the farmyard manure.

8180. I say the only artificial manure?—Yes, that is so.

8181. There was no sulphate of ammonia used there?—No. I specially asked him what manure he used, and he said he bought the superphosphates.

8182. Were those potatoes sprayed? They have not been sprayed this year. It might interest you to hear that for this season spraying has done no good. I do not say that spraying is not beneficial, I only say it just happens that this year it has not done any good. I believe in spraying, and as a matter of fact I bought a sprayer for these men this year, but, as I say, it has not been used.

8183. The cost of seed is put down at 15 cwt., £5 5s. Is it English or Scotch seed?—It is what is called second grown.

8184. That is at the rate of £7 per ton?—Yes.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

8185. Where can you get seed at £7 per ton?—This man did get it at that price. I will make enquiries and let you know where he got it from.†

8186. When you come to the yield it is based on 6 tons at £8 per ton, the actual price made in 1918?—Yes, we took the actual price made in 1918 because we do not know what he is going to get for his crop this year. As a matter of fact he has sold just a few earlies at £10 a ton. We put in that figure of £8 a ton because that is the actual price he made in 1918 for his crop and he hopes to make as much this year.

8187. Was that 1918 crop main crop or an early crop?—They were King Edwards.

8188. Do you know when they were sold?—I think he told me he delivered them in March.

8189. This was in Lincolnshire?—Yes.

8190. I can refer you to the prices according to the Potato (Prices) Growers' Commission for Lincolnshire on black land——?—This is not black land.

8191. On other black land £7 19s. was the maximum price in March?—What was it the next month?

8192. £8.—I know this man sold some time in the spring.

8193. I do not see anything put down for the expense of dressing these potatoes over a 1⅝ inch riddle which you have to do before you can get the price of £8 a ton. Do you know where that expense comes in? They also have to be delivered free on rail. How far is this from a railway station?—This is three miles from a railway station.

8194. Those items have been omitted, and they ought to be included before you can get the £8, and to get the £8 delivery must have taken place not earlier than in April?—I will find out when he sold these potatoes.

8195. Can you also ascertain if there were actually delivered in 1918—6 tons as late in the season as April?—Yes, I will find that out.

8196. You do not know whether that is accurate or not?—I believe it is accurate.

8197. Is 6 tons an average crop?—I think 6 tons is a little below the average on this land rather than above. We have had some men who have grown 10 tons to the acre, but that is an exceptional crop.

8198. In 1913 you have a yield of 6 tons. Do you know whether that is an actual figure or an estimated figure?—No, I do not.

8199.† Could you find out the actual cash that this particular holder received for his potato crop in 1913 and the actual cash he received for his potato crop in 1918?—Yes, I will do so.

8200. Thank you. In the items of cost you have rates 5s. 8d. in 1913 and 5s. 8d. in 1919 on the £2 rent?—Yes.

8201. Have the rates not gone up since 1913?—No, they have not in that district.

8202. They are very fortunate?—They are. It is a rural area. I may say we pay the rates in a lump sum on this farm. The advantage of that is, of course, that we have never had our assessment altered since it was one holding. The steward pays the rates in the lump and divides them up per acre, each man paying his share.

8203. Have the actual county rates not gone up between 1913 and 1919?—Not our district rate; the only rate that has gone up higher has been the drainage rate, and that the landlord pays over and above 2s. an acre.

8204.† In paragraph (6) you deal with the cost of production of an acre of wheat. Could you ascertain what was the actual money received by this smallholder for his wheat in 1913?—Yes.

8205. Looking at the Norfolk figures, the second year, the growing of mangolds, I see you finish the expenditure there with graving and earthing down, and then you put in 15 tons at 10s. per ton. Your expense does not include, apparently, taking these mangolds off the field from the grave?—Do you mean taking them from the grave into the yard or the chaff-house where they cut them up?

8206. Yes?—We finish this account so far as the growing of mangolds is concerned when we grave them down. The other charge would be a charge to the dairy; this man has four cows.

8207. Do you suggest when you sell such a crop as that, that the place of delivery is in a grave in one of your fields?—If this man sold any of them off to his neighbours they would come and fetch them.

8208. So that that would be the place of delivery—in a grave in the field?—Yes.

8209. Not the ordinary delivery to the purchaser?—No, not unless he gets paid for it.

8210. Then in paragraph (10) the cost of producing barley, you have 3 cwt. of artificial manure at 16s. 6d. You have got £1 5s. 6d. down for that. It should be £2 9s. 6d. What is the explanation of that?—I am afraid that is a typist's error; there is something wrong there, certainly.†

8211. Now when you come to reaping, carting and threshing, you have reaping £1. Has this man a self-binder?—Not of his own; he will probably hire it.

8212. I was comparing the £1 with your Lincolnshire price and it does not tally?—I expect it is more in Lincolnshire; wages in Lincolnshire are higher all the way round than they are in Norfolk.

8213. Now come to the next item, carting. In Norfolk the carting is £1 10s. 0d. and in Lincolnshire you have put down the carting as £2 5s. 0d.?—Yes; that is what I should expect to find.

8214. In Norfolk you are dealing with 5½ quarters of barley that you are carting and in Lincolnshire you are dealing with 4½ quarters of wheat?—One man has to cart a mile—the Lincolnshire man. It is a long narrow farm 2 miles in length, and the other man lives within a stone's throw of his field.

8215. Take the next item, threshing. It is £2 in Lincolnshire and £1 10s. 0d. in Norfolk. Is there any reason why it should be so different?—As I say, all Lincolnshire prices are higher, team labour and everything.

8216. "Carting to merchants, 5s. 3d."—how is that?—In the Norfolk district it is half a mile. This man would sell his barley to Preston. This is practically in the village—in the little town of Swaffham.

8217. Are the rates much less in Norfolk than in Lincolnshire?—Yes.

8218. The rates are 1s. 6d.?—That is right. I have looked at his receipts and I know that is the correct figure.

8219. Whereas in Lincolnshire they are 5s. 8d. on £2?—This land is assessed at about half the value of the Lincolnshire to start with.

8220. Look at the next paragraph, grass land laid for hay. Were there no manures there?—No. The seeds are sown, as you know, with the barley or just after the barley, and there is no manure put on.

8221. None whatever?—No.

8222. Will you look at the making of the hay, 5s. Is that not a typist's mistake for 15s.? You have 15s. in the other sheet?—I think it is low, but there again you will find everything is lower in Norfolk in the way of costs.

8223. I do not understand the item in the yield, "¾ Ton (second crop), £6." Was that also made into hay?—Yes, they mow the second crop.

8224.† Where do you charge the expense of it, because it is not in at all. It cannot be in the first one, and you are giving credit there for £6 and are putting absolutely no expense whatever against it. This particular smallholder, I think, you have told us, has 24 acres?—Yes, I think that is what he has on our land.

8225. Can you get for us the actual area of wheat mangolds, barley and hay seeds, because you bring out an average profit per acre of £6 4s. 4d., and without knowing the area we cannot arrive at an average?—They would not be exactly equal of course.

8226. And if this man has sufficient figures to enable you to make out a cash balance sheet to show what cash he has made either last year or this year, it would be very interesting?—This man has farmed on this land for 19 years now, and he had very little capital when he started——

8227.† We have estimates of all the various items, but if you could give us the actual balance sheet of this particular small holding it would be very interesting?—I will try and get it for you.

8228. Thank you?—He has kept more accounts than most of the men; that is why I went to him.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

8229. *Mr. Ashby*: You have been asked a good many questions as to the accuracy of these estimates. I should like you to give us your general opinion. Looking at these figures for acreage and live stock it would appear that the main business is the production of cereals and potatoes excepting in the case of one estate where you have some fruit, but the rearing of live stock is very important, is it not? Is it your experience that since the war where the smallholder's business has been mainly concerned with cereals they have been financially successful?—I think the smallholder whilst he gets a living profit on his cereals the strength of his position is that he keeps two or three cows, and that he rears his calves and never has any stock to buy. He breeds from his mares and his foals and never has any young horses to buy, and he does the same with his breeding sows. So that he is constantly having something to sell each year, and has not to go to the market like big farmers have to do when they want to buy anything. That is his strength so far as cattle are concerned. Then, of course, his wife looks after the poultry and they run a much larger head of poultry, as you see, per acre than the big man does. I think, therefore, the strength of the smallholders' position is very largely in their stock. When you come to Wingland, I think the strength of the men's position there is going to be in their fruit. I might say that I interviewed about 39 ex-soldiers the other day living near this estate who want land and houses to settle down on. They only had allotments on the Wingland estate before they joined up in the Army. As I say I interviewed 39 of them the other day—it took me the whole day. I examined each man. One man proved to me that his brother and he had an acre of land between them in partnership. They grew half an acre of strawberries on half of the land, and they made last year out of their half acre of strawberries £130 gross which they estimated returned them £80 net—that is off half an acre of land. They have let the young plants spread, and there is such a demand for young plants that they have sold £20 worth of young plants. So that they have made £100 off half an acre of strawberries I interviewed another young man, and he made off half an acre of strawberries a net profit of £55. So that I think is the strength of their position—and mark you that is land that was all being farmed before at £1 an acre for years; it was let by the Crown to one man at £1 an acre—and these men have discovered that they can grow fruit upon it, and I believe the strength of their position on that 1,000 acres is going to be fruit, but on the Lincolnshire and Norfolk land there is no doubt the strength of the smallholder's position is in his stock. Is that the sort of answer you wanted?

8230. It is not a question of what answer I want; it is a question of your opinion and of what one can see from the figures you produce. It is your general opinion that if a smallholder is to be successful he cannot depend upon cultivations unless it is on a purely market garden system, and that he must have his live stock to consume his produce?—Quite so, and he must be able to turn round if the markets are against him and consume a great deal of what he has grown—which is what they do do.

8231. Is not another element in the strength of his position the fact that he is consuming a large amount of the produce of his holding?—Yes, I think that is so too. When prices are low and things are against him he can turn his produce into bacon or beef, or whatever it may be.

8232. Have you ever studied or can you give us any sort of figure with reference to the labour income of a man who is farming a smallholding such as these are, of say 20 acres? By labour income I mean the wages for his own manual labour and possibly his wife's, and the net profit?—That, of course, is the great difficulty with all farmers; they will not give you their profits; they will not let you see them, they are so secretive. The only way in which you can judge really is that they make money, and that after a time they are able to retire; and as I know they have not done any other work in the meantime except cultivate the land I am bound to assume that they have made their money out of the land, but they will not tell you.

8233. Do they make it out of the land or do they make it partly out of their families?—This particular man in Lincolnshire has a wife and one daughter at home and they all work—three of them. He has not a large family.

8234. Assuming the daughter works, say, for ten years and receives possibly only pocket money, has she any right in the stock?—I do not know how they manage that. I have got one smallholder who has retired and bought four houses at Peterborough. He has gone to live in one of them and lets the other three. He has passed over his land to his eldest son, and his second son we have also taken in as a tenant. As a rule they behave well to their children. Of course there are exceptions, but as a rule I find they behave well, but I suppose they do not pay them much when they are at home.

8235. When they reach an age of discretion, say 24 or thereabouts, do they still continue to work on the holding or do their parents give them some responsibility and some voice in the management?—Some do and some do not.

8236. The majority do not, I take it?—No, they like to keep it in their own hands; that is rather a weakness which I have tried to overcome and the best of the young men sometimes kick over the traces, as it were, and go off. I should like to keep them on the place, but I find the fathers will hold the reins.

8237. From some remarks you made I think you have studied Mr. Gooding's evidence of the estimated costs and the yield per acre, and although your own acreage costs are much greater than his your costs per quarter are less than his?—Yes, I show a better yield, but I decline to take the average of Norfolk because I say these smallholdings are above the average.

8238. That is to say, they are using their land and their labour far more economically?—Yes, they are, and if you take the average of Norfolk, as Mr. Overman does, it includes a lot of very poor land indeed—a lot of land which is overridden with game and which never will produce its proper quantity until you alter the game laws.

8239. I take it that the game do eat a considerable proportion of the produce?—Yes, I should think they do. If Mr. Gooding in his evidence is taking the whole of Norfolk into consideration I think that you ought also to take into consideration the fact that there are thousands of acres of land in Norfolk which have been bought by people purely for game preserving, and to bring that into the average is not fair at all. There are thousands of acres in my constituency which used to grow four or five quarters to the acre which are now practically derelict or were so until the war. The War Agricultural Committee has made them do something, but there are three large estates to my knowledge in my constituency which have produced very little.

8240. You were asked some questions about the cost of team and manual labour?—That I have promised to get.†

8241. Yes, but I want to put this to you: in cases where men have not got horses of their own, would such charges as these be the amount that they have had to pay to their neighbours for ploughing?—Yes; that is exactly what this man said to me. He said: "When I go and do a day's work for any of my neighbours this is what I charge them." That is what this Lincolnshire man told me.

8242. He is quite satisfied to get that sum when he is working for his neighbours?—Yes, quite, and, therefore, that is what he charges for his own work.

8243. Presumably he makes a small profit when he is working for his neighbours?—Yes, I suppose there is a small profit in that case.

8244. Some little doubt has been thrown upon whether you have put a sufficiently high value upon your farmyard manure for your potatoes?—Is this in Lincolnshire?

8245. Yes, I am referring to paragraph (5) where you have put 12 loads. Have you any idea what the quantity would be in the cart; would it be 12 cwt. or 15 cwt. or what?—It is a good heaped-up cartload;

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

they take it out of the yard and deposit it in heaps, and the 12 loads are supposed to rot down to 8 loads before they spread it on the land.

8246. Do you think the load would be a ton?—No, I do not think it would be a ton.

8247. 15 cwts.?—I should say so; it is a one-horse load.

8248. What sort of proportion would there be of straw, do you know?—I really could not say.

8249. You put down a small amount for the price of straw—10s. in 1913 and £1 in 1919. The market price of straw makes a great deal of difference in what proportion of straw you charge in the case of your potatoes in the cost of the farmyard manure?—Yes, that is so.

8250. Have you any idea of how much seed was sown, for instance, in planting the wheat crop?—No, I have not.

8251. Was it about 2½ bushels?—I should think about that, but I will let you know exactly.†

8252. Also in the case of Norfolk the value of the manure and the value of the straw more or less balance each other, do they not?—Yes.

8253. With regard to the ploughing about which Mr. Overman expressed some doubt he said that in one case you charged 25s. for 5-inch ploughing and in another case you only charged £1 for six-inch ploughing?—Yes.

8254. I suggest to you that, although there is a difference in the depth in the case of mangolds, the work is lighter work because you have previously cleaned the surface?—You think that is the answer?

8255.† Yes?—I will discover what the real facts are.

8256. You have two operations before your six-inch ploughing?—Yes, certainly.

8257. I think you will probably find that is the reason?—Yes.

8258. *Mr. Cautley*: Should I be right in saying that the land in the Holbeach district is about the richest farming land in England?—Yes, in the Long Sutton district that I quoted, which is five miles from Holbeach, I should say that that is some of the finest land in England.

8259. This particular farm of 174 acres which you referred to which has been let for £800—over £4 an acre—grows principally market garden crops, and sends its produce to Covent Garden?—No, not to Covent Garden; they grow crops which are sent to Wisbech for pickling.

8260. At any rate the crops are for human consumption. When it was let at £400 in 1894 that would be almost at the very bottom of the agricultural depression, would it not?—That was at a time when wheat was 25s. a quarter.

8261. It was not at the bottom, but very nearly?—No, it went down lower than that afterwards.

8262. I think we will leave that particular illustration and come to what is really the subject of your evidence, which is extremely interesting, if I may say so. Does your Association take the land on lease?—Yes.

8263. What rent do you pay—I will deal with the Lincolnshire land first?—We pay Lord Lincolnshire I think on an average about 30s. an acre for his three farms. He built us some houses in addition, and we pay him 4½ per cent. interest on those. We took the farms and the cottages in the first instance and when we wanted extra houses he built the houses for us and charged us 4½ per cent. on the cost.

8264. Does he do that now?—No, not since the war; we should not, of course, ask him to build houses for us to-day.

8265. He built you the houses at the proper rate of interest, which was 4½ per cent. before the war, and the Association let out the land to tenants?—Yes.

8266. Do they let it out at such a rent as just pays the expenses, or do they let it out at a profit?—They let it out at a rent which only just pays the cost of the Steward—I have a Steward who looks after the whole of this—and the incidental expenses; we just about pay our way.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

8267. In the case of the smallholder which you have given us, you charge a rent of £2 an acre?—Yes, but that brings in £10 for his house and buildings.

8268. Does each of these smallholders have a house like his?—All the responsible ones.

8269. And buildings?—Yes. We divided up the farmyard buildings. One farmyard is divided up amongst seven of them; another amongst six of them, and another amongst four.

8270. Do I understand that when the fresh houses are built there are no fresh rates put on?—The houses are rated, not the land.

8271. Do you put forward this illustration of the Lincolnshire smallholder as being typical of all the rest, or is his case an exceptional case?—No, this is land in Deeping Fen, and to show you the value of it we were paying about 39s. an acre rent the year before the war, and Lord Lincolnshire sold the adjoining farm to the County Council at £26 an acre.

8272. I observe you started 25 years ago in 1894?—Yes, that is so.

8273. As a matter of fact all your tenants have met an improving time in agriculture right the way on up to the war and probably after the war too?—No, not all the time. The most disastrous year we ever had was 1912 when we had that very wet time in August. We produced about 250 acres of potatoes and there was not an acre of those potatoes which was worth having; the rain stood in the rows for three days and the potatoes were quite spoilt.

8274. In that year the tenants asked for relief and you got relief from your landlord?—Yes, 10 per cent.

8275. From that year prices began to be steadily on the upgrade?—Not for potatoes; potatoes have fluctuated tremendously in the last 25 years. We have sold potatoes as low as 35s. a ton during that time.

8276. I was alluding rather more to the cereals and the price of beef and those sort of things. I think you will agree with me that farming generally has been on the upgrade since 1894?—Yes, I think it has slightly.

8277. So that your smallholders have met better prices generally except in the year 1912?—Carrying my memory back to 1894 and 1900 I do not think there was any rise during those six years in values, but since 1900 there has been a steady rise with the exception of 1912 until we came to the war.

8278. 1912 you say was a disastrous year?—Yes. I can give you an example of that. We farmed 100 acres of this land on co-partnership lines and I kept an exact balance sheet of our operations and we lost £500 that year, that is £5 an acre.

8279. Of course, when they had that disastrous year they had to have relief?—Yes, but it was a very small relief that they got—10 per cent.; it was only 2s. in the £ on their rent. If they had not made money before they could not have stood it.

8280. One bad year would have knocked them out?—Yes, if they had not done well before.

8281. If they were to have a series of falling prices in future they would be hard hit again?—I do not know that I can quite agree with that because these men have shown that they can farm, from a time when wheat was 25s. a quarter.

8282. Do you put forward this case of a farmer of 24 acres of Deeping Fen land as a typical case of the smallholder in your Association?—Yes.

8283. He has not done better or worse than your other smallholders?—No; I only selected him because he is more methodical in his accounts than the others. I daresay I could have found two or three others who would have been equally typical, but I selected this particular man because of his method in keeping his accounts; there might be half a dozen equally as good.

8284. You told us he had about 18 acres of arable land and six acres of grass land?—That is so.

8285. One acre of his grass land was put down for hay?—No, half his grass—he has 6 acres in all. I was only giving you an illustration of what the whole acre would come to. He only mowed three acres of it; he put a temporary fence across the other part of it.

8286. What would the other three acres be?—He grazed that for his cows.

8287. Have you any estimate of what he would make out of the three acres of grass land?—Since I got these figures from him I wrote him asking if he would let me know the value of the butter, eggs and poultry.

8288. That is on the whole farm?—Yes. I asked him to let me have it by yesterday morning, but I have not got it, the reason being that these men do not like to give you too many particulars, but I know they have done remarkably well out of their butter, eggs, and poultry.

8289. It was the yield of the land that I was rather referring to?—The three acres.

8290. Yes. Do you think he would make as much out of it as out of the hay?—No, I do not think so.

8291. You have got down the profit on the acre of hay as £7 3s. 4d.; for the three acres that brings it to £22 10s.?—Yes, but that is at consuming value; if he were to sell it in the open market he would make a little more on it.

8292. What do you put the grass land at?—I understand you have to pay £10 for a ton of hay to-day.

8293. Taking it as the consuming value it is £22 10s. for the three acres of hay; how much do you estimate he would make out of the three acres of grass?—I really could not say, but I should think with butter at 2s. 6d. a lb. he has done remarkably well.

8294. I understand that in these figures in regard to every operation he has performed he has charged his own manual labour at 7s. a day?—Yes, and his wife's at 5s.

8295. But he has not put in any overtime?—No, he has not charged any overtime.

8296. You said he had one daughter?—Yes.

8297. There is nothing allowed for her time?—Yes, he has put down the time of them as wife or as daughter.

8298. Do they work regularly all the time?—No; they do not go out every day, of course; they only go out when there is work to do.

8299. If the man himself gets 7s. a day, two guineas a week, that is about £110 a year?—Yes.

8300. Then there is his wife at 5s. a day and the daughter?—They do not go and work on the land 365 days in the year.

8301. No, but they are working more or less all the time?—Yes, but if you take in all the work you must bring in also the value of their dairying and so on.

8302. Yes, I agree. The only point I am on is that these receipts are rather extraordinary and I think they must be wrong?—I think not.

8303. How many days would the wife work in the week. Her wages would be 30s. a week taking it as a full week?—She does not go out on the land the whole of the year.

8304. No. Assume she is employed half the year then there is the daughter, I suppose she is kept pretty well at work all day?—Yes.

8305. They do not pay them much, but they work them hard on these smallholdings?—That is so, but it is a very satisfactory life.

8306. I agree. Supposing you put the daughter at £40 a year and the wife at £40 that is £190 a year. You have worked out the profit on this Lincolnshire holding on potatoes £14 13s. 4d. the first year, £4 0s. 4d. the second year on the wheat, and the third year oat crop is not worked out, but I understand it is about the same as the second year, the wheat, £4. That makes a total of £22 13s. 8d. for three acres making an average per acre of £7 11s. 2d. If you multiply that by the 18 acres that comes to £136. Then if you take the three acres of grass land land for hay at consuming value that is £22 10s., and the three acres that are grazed at £20, it makes £178 10s. They are, therefore, getting a profit on these 24 acres of land of £178 10s. over and above the £190 they have received for their labour, that is without overtime?—That is not all profit.

8307. They have got paid for their labour?—You are now reckoning the total income of this family.

8308. Yes?—You have to start putting down their outgoings before you talk about profit.

8309. The profit is £178 10s. over and above their labour?—You are taking the total income of the family—the total profit on the land plus their labour.

8310. The total income comes to £368?—Yes, but there is the cost of living—three of them.

8311. Their wages would cover that. Take it that they spend up to the wages which they have got out of the farm as the ordinary agricultural labourer does, what I suggest to you is that out of this 24 acres of land it is a money yield which cannot be done when you work it out as I have done, and there must be some flaw in these figures?—Where is the flaw?

8312. Do any of your tenants pay income tax?—Yes, some of them are now getting their papers for the first time, and I am very glad they are.

8313. Take the Norfolk figures. I understand these figures again are in respect of a farm of 24 acres?—I said I was not quite sure as to the acreage; I have made a note to get the actual area.

8314. Is this illustration of the yield given by the Swaffham smallholding a typical one as regards the yield in the other cases, or is it picked out as being specially good or specially bad?—Specially good. I look upon him as being above the average on that farm; I always have done.

8315. If you turn to the last page—this is on the four-course system—the average profit works out at £6 4s. 4d. per acre?—Yes; that has to be a little modified.

8316. That has to be added to?—No, it has not to be added to, has it?

8317. There is one item that ought to be £2 9s. 9d. instead of £1 7s. 7d.?—Against that there is the getting of the second crop of hay.

8318. I agree it is subject to correction as the result of the previous questions you have answered, but taking your original figures you must add on a fourth of £1 2s., that makes £6 10s. an acre. If you multiply that by the 24 acres again you get a profit of £156 over and above the wages earned by the family. Can you tell me of what the family consisted at this time?—This man is an elderly man and his sons are all out.

8319. He is working the smallholding himself?—Yes, and his wife is getting on in years and she never goes out.

8320. Who does the work on the holding?—He works himself and hires a labourer. He does his own milking and all that.

8321. Do I understand that his labour is charged for?—Yes, he has charged for his own labour, but what amount of this represents his own labour I could not say. This man I should think is 68.

8322. Their standard of living is about the same as that of the ordinary agricultural worker, is it?—No, it is better than that. This man in Lincolnshire has an eight-roomed house, a parlour, a nice living room, a kitchen and a very nice dairy and four bedrooms. I had tea with them and everything is charmingly appointed. The standard of life is much higher than that of the Norfolk labourer. They do not have margarine for tea. We had nice cream and marmalade and all sorts of things for tea.

8323. Does that apply to the Swaffham smallholders too?—I have also had meals at the Swaffham smallholders' place. The only complaint I have is that his wife cannot make a Norfolk dumpling. It is too heavy.

8324. Out of this smallholding, in addition to the wages earned on the farm, they also have a profit of £156?—You say a profit, but they have to charge all their living expenses against it.

8325. That goes against the amount they receive for their labour?—I wish my profits came out like that.

8326. They have got their rent free and a great part of their food and the rates and everything are all charged before this profit is arrived at?—They have the ordinary living expenses that a farmer would have, say, £3 a week.

8327. They get their eggs and butter and milk and garden produce at cost price—the main items of their living expenses—and I suggest that the mere statement of the figures shows that there must be something wrong in the figures you have put before us?—That is not my view. My view is that the figures show that farming is one of the best businesses under the sun.

8328. Now I ask you generally on the statements you have given us to-day, is it your view from your experience that the farming industry even at the present rate of wages is a profitable industry?—Yes, certainly.

8329. Is it your view that there is any need of assistance either in the shape of a guarantee of prices or of any other kind to enable the land to remain in cultivation. Before you answer that let me tell you that no other witness has made such a suggestion?—I will tell you what I am going to suggest. I was one of the authors of the Corn Production Act——

8330. Were you on Lord Selborne's Committee?—No. Lord Selborne's Committee recommended 42s. as the post war price of wheat. I was at the Board of Agriculture at the time and my name was on the back of the Corn Production Act and I had to justify it in the House of Commons as a free-trader. I justified it of course on the ground of the exigencies of war, and if I had a free hand to-day I should let the Corn Production Act come into full play after this year.

8331. With a guarantee of 45s. on wheat?—Quite.

8332. What use would that be on your own figures?—We should flourish like a green bay tree. I do not fear anything with a guarantee of 45s.

8333. To show the profit you have shown on your wheat growing you have had on your own figures to take the price of wheat at 75s. 6d?—I have shown you that for 25 years we have been growing wheat at a profit. The price never reached 45s. until the war, and yet we have been able to do it successfully.

8334. I venture to suggest to you that has nothing to do with the matter, because the expense of production is on a totally different basis now. Wages, for example, have gone up 150 to 200 per cent., and prices of feeding stuffs and other things have gone up 150 and 200 per cent. and even more?—Yes, but I maintain that even in those times they could have paid better wages if they had been compelled to do so.

8335. I am not going back to the past; I want your views as to the future. You have just told me that was the only remedy—if you call it a remedy—is to go back to the Corn Production Act as it is and let it come into operation?—That is it; that is 45s. a quarter next year—with the proviso that Part IV should be used which insists upon good cultivation. That is extremely important.

8336. May I point out to you that if you take your Norfolk smallholder you only show a profit of £1 4s. 3d., but that should be increased because he used rather less manure this year. If you only show a profit of that amount on the acre of wheat taking the price at 75s. 6d., what profit could you show if the price of wheat were only 45s.?—If the costs of production remain as high as they are to-day; but they will not.

8337. In your view the cost of production will go down?—Yes.

8338. When do you think that will happen?—The moment you start giving 45s. for wheat you will soon find the cost of production will go down.

8339. I do not quite understand what you mean. Assume the price of wheat went down to 45s. in this country because of the world prices and there was only a guarantee to the farmer of 45s., how would that bring down the cost of production?—You would find that artificial manures, for example, would at once go down in value; people would not give the price for them.

8340. I am pointing out to you that on your own figures your wheat only leaves a profit of £1 4s. 3d. in a year when he uses less manure than he ordinarily would do, and taking the price at 75s. 6d. a quarter. If 45s. was the only price he could get these figures would show a loss?—Yes, but you must remember what the costs of production were—are you taking the Norfolk figures?

8341. Yes?—You must remember the cost of production in 1913 was half what it was in 1919.

8342. I am taking the cost of production at the present time. We are only concerned with the future. The question we have to decide is whether any assistance should be given to farmers in the public interest by way of a guarantee or otherwise to enable wheat to be produced to keep the land in cultivation, and to enable the farmer to pay the present scale of wages and make a profit for himself. If he does not make a profit the farmer will go out of business or the land will be uncultivated?—I say speaking for the smallholders, they will be quite content with the Corn Production Act—a guarantee of 45s. provided it also carries with it an insistence upon good cultivation; that is what we want in this country.

8343. Will you explain to me how on these figures if the price were to go down to 45s. this small holder could live?—If he depended entirely upon wheat he would not be able to do so, but as I have pointed out to you and to other members of the Committee these smallholders do not rely entirely upon wheat. It is not fair to take just one single crop when these men grow all these other crops here of rye, beans, peas, potatoes, and so on. He may make £20 an acre out of his potatoes.

8344. Wheat is taken as the standard in fixing a guarantee and it is on that basis that wages have to be paid?—No, not at all.

8345. The rate of wages is 7s. a day?—The rate of wages in Lincolnshire has been fixed not so much on the price of wheat as on the price of potatoes.

8346. It has been fixed quite independently of the price of wheat, I quite agree; it is a rate of wages which is necessary to keep the men in efficiency and in reasonable comfort according to his condition of life?—It is not the value of the wheat crop that fixes the rate of wages; it is the value of all the crops.

8347. *Chairman*: I think, Sir Richard, if you would not mind, it would be better that you should just answer the questions and not argue?—I am sorry. I was rather afraid that when I met Mr. Cautley we should develop into an argument and I made up my mind before I came that I would try not to let that happen.

8348. *Mr. Cautley*: I know you have done a great work for these smallholders and I want you to keep them going——?—Yes, and I shall keep them going.

8349. At the same time I must test these figures and I ask you again whether you can explain to me how this particular smallholder would be able to live on these figures if instead of 75s. 6d. a quarter he only received 45s. and the corresponding guarantee in respect of oats under the Corn Production Act?—My only answer is that the proof of the pudding is in the eating of it, and if you will try it I guarantee that the smallholders I have anything to do with—these 200 men—will get a good living out of it.

8350. Your figures do not show it, you see?—Well, there it is.

8351. That is the only answer we can get?—Yes.

8352. *Mr. Langford*: You are a great believer in smallholdings?—I have been for 30 years.

8353. A great many questions have been put to you upon the balance sheets and upon the costs of production, and so forth?—Yes.

8354. Despite all those questions you still believe that these smallholders that you know in your district have made a great success of their smallholdings?—I have absolute proof of that.

8355. You say that many of them in addition to getting a living out of them have been able to retire?—I did not say many.

8356. Some of them?—I say several, and others have taken larger holdings.

8357. And made room for other smallholders?—Made room for their sons.

8358. We are more concerned, of course, with the future?—Yes.

8359. Are you still as hopeful of the future of smallholdings—I do not mean particularly those that

are now in existence because one of the great advantages that accrue to them, I think you will agree, is that they have security of tenure at a fixed rental?—Yes.

8360. A large farmer has not got that privilege?—Some of them have.

8361. Some have for the time being?—Of course, a good many farmers now, as you know, are buying their holdings.

8362. Quite—which from the point of view of economy is not a desirable thing?—I am not sure of that.

8363. At any rate, it will mean that it will be at an increased rental or interest on capital?—Yes, but that will make them produce more. Take the case of the Thorney Estate which the Duke of Bedford sold two years before the war to the sitting tenants—a large estate near Peterborough. I guarantee that that estate is producing 50 per cent. more food to-day than it did when those men were tenants of the Duke of Bedford, because they farmed at a low rent and they only farmed up to their rent. Now they have had to exert themselves and some enterprising men have come in and on the whole it is a good thing, I am sure.

8364. I put it to you there is another vital reason why they produce more on these particular farms. Will you agree with me that it is very largely in consequence of their realising that what they do invest in the land will remain in the land and that they will be able to extract the full value from the land for themselves?—Yes, and also they are not subject to restrictions. There was a time, for example, when the landlord of the Thorney Estate would not allow them to grow potatoes.

8365. They are not subject after having improved the fertility of the soil to have their rent increased because of their own improvements?—That is so.

8366. Or to be turned out?—Or to be turned out.

8367. You have told us that on this one estate of 1,000 acres you have 39 houses and families in holdings of varying size?—Yes.

8368. You are able to let those holdings at rentals of from 30s. to 50s. an acre?—The grass land at 50s.; there is no arable land as high as 50s.

8369. What are the homesteads let at?—The houses are generally £10; we always put them in at a separate rent because we want to show that the man would have to live somewhere wherever he was, and, therefore, we put the house and buildings in at £10. It brings the land at a little lower rent than they are actually paying.

8370. In the case of the crops you have put before us it is the rental of the land as detached from the house?—That is so.

8371. With regard to the future, County Councils are buying up land or attempting to do so on which smallholders, discharged soldiers and sailors, and so on may be put. Having to buy the land at the present market value, which is an increased value as you have told us, how will they be able to erect houses and buildings upon it and be able to charge economic rentals which will admit of the smallholders in the future getting a living?—By the State losing a great deal of money.

8372. Only by the State losing a lot of money?—That is all.

8373. Would you agree with me that to erect a homestead at the present day comprising a house and buildings and so on for a farm of 30 acres would cost approximately £1,000?—Quite, if they put up decent buildings.

8374. You would have to reckon at least 6 per cent. interest on that?—Yes.

8375. So that the rental of the homestead instead of being as it is in the case of your smallholder £10, would be £60 to the future smallholder?—Yes, but the County Councils are not going to charge a rent of £60; they are going to charge the smallholder a fair rent and the Government is going to bear the loss.

8376. You know Governments change?—Yes, but you cannot change an Act of Parliament very easily; I have never seen an Act of Parliament like that changed in my 13 years' experience.

8377. Do you honestly believe that the somewhat vague promise made by the present Government is going to be honoured in, say, seven or eight years' time?—It is all in the Land Settlement Act and the Land Acquisition Act, but I think the Land Acquisition Act is specially bad.

8378. I agree with you. Quite apart from the cost of the house and buildings do you think that the smallholder will be able to pay an economic rent on the purchase price of the land or will the State have to bear a portion of that?—What I understand the County Councils are going to do—the Government have set it all out—is to buy the land at its present war price and erect houses and buildings upon it and then fix what is a fair rent and any loss is to be borne by the State.

8379. As to the type of smallholders to be put upon the land, would you agree with me that it needs very great care in the examination of applicants even in their own interest to decide whether the men would be likely to make a success of it or not. Let me put it quite clearly: many of the soldiers that are applying for smallholdings know nothing whatever about the practical part of agriculture?—I was surprised when I interviewed the men from one of the colonies at the big percentage of men who had a previous knowledge of agriculture; there is a small percentage who have not had any previous knowledge of it, but they are arranging training farms for those men.

8380. Until the men are trained it is not wise to put them on the land, is it?—I do not think it is in their own interests.

8381. You aroused my curiosity when you gave us particulars of the farm of 174 acres of which the rent had been so greatly increased. You know that farm yourself, do you?—I do.

8382. And you know that the facts you have stated are accurate?—Yes, I know the facts; I have seen the leases and the letters from the landlord putting up the rent.

8383. I want to bring out this point because yesterday we had the question put to a witness and that witness said that farm rents were not being increased?—I do not know what part of the country he lives in.

8384. Do you know of any Act of Parliament under which it is impossible for a landlord to increase rents?—No. The Corn Production Act says that he shall not increase his rent because of anything in that Act, but that Act has never come into force as we have never got down so low as the guarantee in the Act; the Act has been of no effect so far.

8385. It is easy for a landowner to drive through that Act?—It is not necessary for him to drive through it, because it has not come into operation.

8386. The farm you refer to of which the rent had been so largely increased was let in 1894 at £420 a year—174 acres; that would be about 48s. an acre?—Yes. The lease expired in 1908 and it was then let to the farmer on another 7 years' lease at £560. At the end of that lease in 1915 he took it on yearly tenancy at £660.

8387. Could you tell us whether the tenant farmer was willing to take it on another lease?—He had it on a yearly tenancy at £660, and he wanted to remain at that, and was quite prepared to remain at that rent.

8388. He was not prepared to take another lease?—He would have taken another lease at that rent, but it was not offered to him.

8389. I want to be quite clear on this point?—I have no doubt what happened was that the landlord began to see in 1915 that land was going up, and, therefore, he said, "I shall only let it to you on yearly tenancy."

8390. Is it your view that tenants would take leases of their farms if they had the opportunity?—I am certain they would.

8391. I put it to you, the reason they are not taking leases of their farms is because they are not able to obtain them?—Not at reasonable rents.

8392. Landlords are only too anxious to put their land on the market and get these inflated prices

for it while they last?—A good many of them, I will not say all of them.

8393. The increase of rent in the case of this particular farm between the years 1908 and 1915 amounts to 27s. an acre, or rather over 50 per cent. in 7 years?—Yes, and he was prepared to go on paying that, but then the landlord said, "I must have more rent still this coming year, 1918," and he put the tenant under notice to quit. The tenant said: "What rent do you want." The landlord said £800 a year, and the tenant said, "I cannot pay it and I will not pay it," and he went out.

8394. The tenant has actually now vacated the farm in consequence of the continued demand of the landlord for an increased rent?—Yes, quite, but mark you it has been let at £800 a year.

8395. Was it the same landlord the whole of the time?—Yes, the same landlord.

8396. You would not agree with a witness we had before us yesterday who said that rents are not being increased?—I do not know of any district in the Eastern counties where rents are not on the rise; they are on the rise everywhere.

8397. Would you agree with me that if these prices for farm produce continue the time will soon come when the whole advantage of the increased prices will get into the landlord's pockets?—A greater part of it.

8398. Have you thought of any scheme by which that can be prevented?—Land nationalisation.

8399. I am afraid we are a good way from that?—Perhaps we are, but we have got that principle established of course in the land which has been purchased by the County Councils as you know.

8400. I know and I agree that full security should be given to the tenant, and you would agree with that until we arrive at what you regard as a happy state of affairs, land nationalisation?—Quite.

8401. Do you believe in Rent Courts?—Yes.

8402. Is it your opinion that many of these farmers' rents have been increased upon their own improvements?—No, not the large farmers—do you mean the improvements to buildings, and that sort of thing.

8403. No, I mean the improved fertility of the soil?—No, I do not think there is a great deal of that; there are some cases of course.

8404. Then the increases are due to the increased prices of commodities?—Largely; that is the great factor, I think.

8405. If you had capitalised that holding of 174 acres at 4 per cent., it would have been worth less than £40 an acre in 1908?—That is about the price it remained at in that district; land was selling at about £40 to £50 an acre in that district then; it is now making £100 to £120.

8406. Capitalising it at 5 per cent., which is a moderate increase, the landlord would get rather more than double for his land in seven years?—Many landlords who have sold out lately have doubled their incomes. For example, Mr. Christopher Turner, who is well known in the agricultural world, sold his estate near Lincoln not very long ago and by that means has doubled his income.

8407. The landlord, without doing anything to increase the capital value of the farm during the last seven years, apart from any expenditure in improving the farm, has got an average increase per year far beyond the profits of the farmer, who has devoted the whole of his time to the cultivation of that land?—No, I do not think far beyond; I think the farmer has had a very good time.

8408. I agree with you during the war he has?—I know he has; I do not think it.

8409. Apart from the last increase from £420 to £660 I work out the increase per annum which would go into the landlord's pocket if he sold on that basis at £3 17s. an acre, and on the £800 it would be considerably more. The increase of rent is an important factor in the cost of production, is it not?—Yes.

8410. In arriving at a price based upon cost of production the food of the general public would necessarily be higher in consequence of these large increases of rental?—Naturally, if rents go up.

8411. One word as to game. This is the first time we have heard anything about game since the Commission has been sitting. Is it your opinion that game on some estates do a vast amount of injury to the farmers' crops?—A vast amount. The result is they cannot get the best farmers to come and farm on the game estates at all.

8412. And the nation suffers in consequence?—Exactly.

8413. Would you agree that the game ought to belong to the tenant who rents the farm and feeds the game?—I would abolish the game laws.

8414. That would mean that the tenant would have an equal right with the landlord to shoot the game?—That is it.

8415. *Mr. Duncan*: I think you stated in reply to a question that you think the State ought to subsidise smallholdings?—Do you mean for soldiers? The Land Settlement Act does provide for subsidy, inasmuch as whatever the land costs the soldiers are only to be charged a fair economic rent. That is a policy I do not agree with. I wanted to take land at pre-war prices.

8416. But if land is to be taken or smallholdings are to be entered upon at the present time, that is the only way you see of making them successful. If smallholdings are to be entered upon at the present costs, do you think it would be possible for the smallholder to face the costs without some subsidy?—No; I do not think the smallholder can pay the present war prices plus the enormous cost of equipment; that is, the house and buildings which are almost prohibitive to-day.

8417. In paragraph 4 you speak of the increased value of agricultural land. Is it your experience in the Eastern Counties that the farmers are competing for farms?—For purchasing farms?

8418. Presumably if a farm is going to be increased in rent, the landlord must have some choice of tenants?—Yes. The landlord to-day will have no difficulty in getting tenants at increased rents from what he was charging in pre-war days.

8419. That rather indicates that the farmers themselves are pretty hopeful of the outlook?—I think so.

8420. *Mr. Edwards*: First, in regard to Lincolnshire, you say that most of your tenants are agricultural labourers. I should like to know how these men who have had holdings from you compare with a similar class of men who have still remained as agricultural labourers?—They are in a better position than the agricultural labourers are to-day, because they not only get a little better income, but they are able to live better altogether out of their holding. They have a higher standard of comfort than the labourers.

8421. You have here the quantity of stuff or produce grown on your estate of 2,266 acres, or thereabouts. How does that compare with a similar area of similar land in your opinion?—In large farms?

8422. Yes, in large farms?—My experience is that the smaller holder goes in for rather a greater variety than the large farmer—a greater variety of cropping. He grows more catch crops than an ordinary farmer.

8423. As to the total produce measured in money, say, at the present moment, which do you think would be producing the largest value of stuff per acre or per 100 acres?—I think the smallholder would, when you take into consideration all his stock as well—butter, milk and eggs.

8424. And would that be particularly true of small items like poultry and things of that kind?—Yes; pigs, poultry, cows, and all they produce.

8425. Do you think the fact that these men on these holdings have absolute security of tenure at a fixed rent, or a known rent—they know the conditions and they know that those conditions are permanent practically—has had any influence on their development of the holdings?—I think it has a great influence. There is not only fixity of tenure as long as our leases last, but we have renewed the lease on one occasion. It was a 21 years' lease that we took the land on in the first place; then about 10 years ago we cancelled the old lease and created

a new one for 21 years, and we are going to proceed to do that again. All the men will know directly that they have another 21 years and the rents approximate very closely to the rents paid by the larger farmers.

8426. Have you applications from ordinary working men of the same class as your present holders for small holdings?—Yes. It is a most difficult problem. We have a waiting list of, I think you might say, hundreds.

8427. I meant now—not exactly the soldiers?—No; but I was going to tell you that we had 100 acres to let on the Wingland Estate, and we let it be known we would let it, and we have had altogether between 80 and 90 applications. Then I selected them and said we must give the ex-soldiers first chance, and there were 39 who were ex-soldiers and 50 who were not ex-soldiers, many of them already tenants, who want a little more land.

8428. These men were a class of men who knew the conditions and who knew the success of your present tenants?—Quite.

8429. The psychological effect of the fixing of prices under the Corn Production Act has been mentioned to us, I think by Sir Thomas Middleton, whom you know very well; do you think that the fact, that the vast majority of the farmers of this country are always farming and that they do not know the day that they may get notice to quit for some reason or another, has had what you may call a psychological effect on the farmers?—Insecurity of tenure?

8430. Yes, the insecurity of tenure as compared with your tenants here?—I do not think the insecurity of tenure has been a very great factor. There has not been a great deal of insecurity of tenure on the large estates; it has only been amongst the smaller landowners there has been insecurity until recently of course. During the war a large number of landowners were putting their land into the market, as you know, but until the period of war there was not very much insecurity of tenure on the large estates. So long as a man farmed fairly well and paid his rent, he was secure.

8431. You have already said that a good deal of the land in the country is on sale at the present time and that the prices have increased from 30 per cent. up to 100 per cent., and you seemed to indicate that that was an infallible index of agricultural prosperity. I should like you to explain more fully what you mean by that?—I mean this, that when land is put into the market now, not only the sitting tenant, but even an outsider is prepared to give more for it than he would have done, say, in 1914, and I cannot imagine any sane person doing it unless he was fairly sure of making an increased profit out of it.

8432. You are not acquainted with Wales, I presume?—I have been down to Pembrey, where we purchased an estate for ex-soldiers, and also up into Cheshire, near to the River Dee, but I do not know much about Wales.

8433. You are aware that the farmers, as a class, have a great attachment to their holdings—to their home?—Quite.

8434. And you would be prepared, I suppose to admit that the fact that the sitting tenant pays a certain sum in open competition for the farm is no real proof that that farmer calculates in the way you suggest?—I think it is a fairly good proof, because I do not think the other competitors would come in if they did not know it was a good thing. I should not want to buy a farm at the increased value unless I was persuaded that it was going to pay.

8435. Do you know what happened after a similar crisis to that which we are passing through now. The greatest crisis was after the Napoleonic Wars. You know what happened after the Napoleonic Wars?

The Chairman: I do not think that is a question that comes within the ambit of our examination—going back to the Napoleonic period.

Mr. Edwards: I think it is most essential.

The Chairman: I am afraid I must rule you out of order on that subject.

8436. *Mr. Edwards*: You admit that we now live in an utterly abnormal period?—I do.

8437. And that the prosperity of agriculture at the present moment is an absolutely fictitious prosperity?—It is not fictitious, because it is there; it is abnormal.

8438. It is a prosperity of prices and not of produce. The whole prosperity you will admit is not that we produce more from our farms but the prices are higher?—It is not a fictitious prosperity; it is a real prosperity for the time being, but it is abnormal.

8439. We all expect that we shall before long reach something like a normal state of affairs. What will be the state of these men who are paying from 30 to 100 per cent. more for their land? I am speaking of the sitting tenants; what is likely to be their position in the future?—Unless they have made a very good profit during the intervening years, they will be losers, as they were in the 'seventies. We are now repeating what happened between 1868 and 1874, and then the price of land dropped and people suffered.

8440. As to the position at the present moment, that land is fetching from 30 to 100 per cent. more than it did in pre-war times, and at the same time we as a nation expect things to arrive at the normal state of affairs?—Yes; it depends upon when that time arrives as to how much these people will lose.

8441. Consequently, inevitably, if that is your opinion, the position of these men will not be an agreeable one in five or ten years hence?—But that is no reason why the consuming public should pay more in order to bolster up these people in making bad bargains.

8442. I am looking at the matter from the national point of view—of agriculture in the near future when we hope to see a state of normal times.

The Chairman: I think the witness has answered your question.

8443. *Mr. Edwards*: Now you say that rent is on the rise in all districts known to you. There is one other point I should like to ask you in regard to the sales of land which you mentioned just now. You mentioned a well-known authority on agriculture, Mr. Turnor by name, who has doubled his income by selling his land?—Selling his estate, or one of his estates, perhaps.

8444. And the landowners are doing it as a class all over the country?—Yes.

8445. What would be the result if the tenant farmers had followed the same method of cashing the values in the same way as the landowners—I mean of the stock?—Going out of farming?

8446. Yes?—Some of them are.

8447. What if they did all over the country in the same proportion as landowners?—There are a great many farmers in the Eastern Counties who have taken the opportunity of going out now having made their money. I live in the town of Peterborough, and during this last four years we have had about 20 farmers come and buy houses in Peterborough, and retire.

8448. Is that likely to have a good or a bad effect on farming in the future? I suppose you will admit that this Commission is really to prepare the ground for the future policy of agriculture?—Quite.

8449. Assuming that there are a large proportion of farmers who are cashing their stock——?—I will not say a large proportion; a considerable number. They are letting in other men who have taken their farms, and up to the present those men are doing very well.

8450. But these men are going in now at the present prices, 100 per cent. over the ordinary prices?—Yes.

8451. What will be the result in the case of these men when they reach the normal times which we all expect?—I do not know. They will have to cut their coat according to their cloth like the rest of us. I do not see how we can legislate for them. What they are doing, they are doing with their eyes open. A man who goes in for farming to-day and agrees to pay for land and agrees to buy implements and everything at an increased price is like a man going into any other business; he takes the risks.

8452. I quite agree; but we must take things as they are. I want to know the effect of all this on the development of agriculture in the future?—Of

course it depends upon how long this abnormal condition lasts. There are several men I know who made the fee simple out of their land in one year—out of potatoes.

8453. You are aware that the produce of the land has been controlled—butter, milk, beef, corn, and everything else has been controlled?—Yes, at very remunerative prices.

8454. In view of that fact, will you admit that the Government also should have controlled the price of land?

Chairman: That is outside the scope of our present inquiry. We are not allowed to enter into questions of nationalisation.

8455. *Mr. Edwards*: You, as a Member of Parliament, I presume, heard the speech of the Prime Minister, in which he said that as a result of the Corn Production Act they were going to fix the price for corn?—Not fix it.

8456. Guarantee it?—Yes, guarantee a minimum.

8457. Two things must follow, he said. The working man must be properly paid, and the rents must not be allowed to rise as they did during the Napoleonic wars. Do you remember those words?—I do not remember that he dealt with it in that way.

8458. Assume that he did——

Chairman: I think that is useless, too, because you are cross-examining the witness on something he is not competent to tell us.

8459. *Mr. Edwards*: Then I will put it in another way. I am a tenant farmer and all my stuff has been controlled, of which I am not complaining a bit. Do you think it is fair between class and class to control what I produce out of the land and to leave the land to have the war price?—You mean to leave you in a position to have your rent raised?

8460. No. I am speaking of the selling of land at the present moment, and the effect of it upon the future of farming in this country. The point is that all I produce out of the land is controlled, and the land itself is allowed to be sold in the open market. Is that fair as between the classes that live on the land? There are three classes on the land, as you are well aware. The working man is guaranteed his wages; the landlord is allowed to raise his rent as much as he likes, and to have the top price of the market—the war prices; the tenant farmers on the other hand——?—Are also getting war prices.

8461. We are not getting open markets?—Not open markets.

8462. But the landowner does get the open market, and I want to know from you as a Member of Parliament why the differentiation was made and allowed to continue?

Chairman: You are not here as a Member of Parliament and you need not answer as a Member of Parliament.

Mr. Edwards: He is here as Sir Richard Winfrey.

8463. *Chairman*: You must say you are not able to answer if you are not able to answer?—I am not able to answer for Parliament, I am afraid. It is rather a poser.

8464-5. *Mr. Green*: I want to get some comparison between the multiple farms and the small holdings. Round about Spalding there are a number of multiple farms, are there not?—There are, yes.

8466. Have you made any comparison in your researches between the productive power of these large farms and the small holdings?—The majority of our large farmers are very up-to-date farmers and farming remarkably well, but what they do not go in for is the amount of stock per acre that the little man does, and all the etceteras like pigs and poultry. When a man is farming five or six farms, he has a bailiff on five of them probably; and they do not cultivate every corner of their land in the way that a small holder does.

8467. We were told by former witnesses that these large farms would be excellent for one reason as offering some incentive to the sons of farmers to get posts as managers or sub-managers. We heard from a witness yesterday that the bailiff on 2,700 acres got £3 a week. That wage is less than the Forfarshire ploughman gets. Do you think there would be any incentive to the sons of farmers to go on large farms if they are only going to get wages of £3 a week as bailiffs and sub-managers?—I do not think in Lincolnshire you would find any farm bailiff getting as little as £3 a week.

8468. This is Northamptonshire?—I am sure they are getting more than that. They get their rent free; they are allowed very often to keep a cow, and the foreman's wife gets so much a score for all the eggs; they get a great deal more than £3 a week.

8469. I want to get at this labour income on these small holdings. That is a very important point, is it not?—It is, yes.

8470. When I was at Sutton Bridge, Wingland, I found a small holder with 40 acres with 10 daughters. I suggest to you that if one small holder retired to Peterborough and bought four houses, this man must have bought a street of houses?—He would get his daughters married off to other small holders in time. That is a very exceptional case.

8471. I daresay you know the family?—Trolly?

8472. Yes?—Poor old Trolly is dead; but he was only in that holding for about five years. He was a farm foreman himself before he took that holding. I think he only had the holding for five or perhaps six years. He left his widow something like £500, and she is living in one of our cottages to-day, and goes out to do occasional work. He evidently made a profit of about £100 a year on that holding during those five years.

8473. You have been criticised about the number of horses on these holdings. I venture to submit to you that some of these small holders not only bred horses, like Mr. Trolly, but they must have dealt in horses, too. Do not you think that would account for the great number of horses?—A great number of these smallholders do a great deal of carting for the Rural District Council; in winter time they cart great quantities of granite on to the roads; that is a very favourite occupation.

8474. That is to say, they get carting outside their holdings?—Yes.

8475. Then with regard to the thatching, I daresay many of these smallholdings have very excellently built buildings; they have Dutch barns, and that would save a certain amount of thatching?—We only have Dutch barns on one of the Wingland farms.

8476. Is that all?—Yes, I wish we had more.

8477. I thought I saw them at Moulton?—On the Crown?

8478. Yes?—You may have done on the Moulton Estate.

8479. Most of these smallholders owe their existence to the enterprise of Parish Councils, do they not?—It is only in that one case of Moulton where the Parish Council went in for smallholdings; otherwise the Parish Council have dealt with allotments only.

8480. Only in the Moulton case?—Only in that one case.

8481. Are most of the stock-holding smallholdings from 20 to 30 acres? I thought there were some at 40 acres?—We have not many. I think perhaps we may have one or two.

8482. Most of them are 20 to 30 acres?—Yes; 25 acres is about our average.

8483. Can you give us your opinion of the economic size of a holding on medium land on which the occupier can work two horses?—About 25 to 30 acres.

8484. You think as small as that?—I do, because he would find other work for his horses, and he does as a matter of fact find other work.

8485. I meant keeping them entirely at work; what would you consider the economic size?—If he has two horses, probably one is a mare with a foal, and it would not be working all the year. He would rest it three or four months, so that during that time he would only have one.

8486. These smallholdings have increased the production and prosperity of neighbouring villages, have they not?—They have increased the population.

8487. With the exception of one co-partnership farm of 123 acres, at Wingland, there has been almost an entire absence of co-operation or marketing facilities? With the exception of this Wingland Trading

Society, of which I am Chairman, which has now a turnover of about £15,000 a year.

8488. And yet the production has been greater than when the land was in the hands of a few?—Certainly, on all this land.

8489. This co-partnership farm made a profit of only £67 16s. 10d. in 1913?—That is so.

8490. And in 1917 made a profit of £732?—Yes.

8491. And what was the profit in 1918?—The profit in 1918 was £500, I think. I am speaking from memory. We have had two profits of £500 and one profit of £700 during the war. I am not quite clear now which years they were.

8492. Can you give us the figures for 1918?—I think, £500. £700 has been our high-water mark.

8493. Did you not make a slip just now when in answer to one of the Commissioners you said they had more than 100 acres under fruit?—I said soft fruit, 85. This is on the whole of that Wingland Estate; there are 113 acres under fruit to-day; that is out of 1,000 acres, so that one-tenth part of it is under fruit.

8494. Is there any tendency to let the cultivated land revert to grass?—None; it is much too valuable.

8495. They broke up grassland when wheat was in the region of 30s. a quarter without any prospect of guaranteed prices to give them any sense of security against loss?—That is quite true. When we took the first farm of Lord Lincolnshire called the Willow Tree Farm in 1894, after about two years they asked me if they might plough up certain fields, and I got the consent of the landlord, and they were ploughed up, and now we have ploughed up some more during the war.

8496. I notice that in 1917 they sowed 967 acres with corn out of 2,255. Is there any clamour for guaranteed prices amongst these small holders?—None.

8497. You are one of the authors of the Corn Production Act, are not you?—I do not think I can assume the authorship of it, but as Parliamentary Secretary my name was on the Bill, and I take my share of the responsibility.

8498. When you said just now that you thought that 45s. should remain the figure for next year and you thought farmers could live out of it, a guaranteed price of that figure, I suppose when you said prices would fall, you meant the prices of fertilisers, feeding cakes, and so forth, but not wages?—No; I do not think wages will fall. I do not think they ought to fall, because I always held that we ought to have paid better wages in pre-war times, and could have paid better wages in pre-war times.

8499. Do you think that farmers would get better machinery and would organise their labour better than in the past?—They are already doing that. The motor tractor has done a very great deal. We have already purchased a motor tractor on the Wingland Estate.

8500. You would agree, I suppose, that compulsory powers rather than guaranteed prices were the lever to bring into cultivation a larger acreage of corn?—Quite so; it was compulsion.

8500A. Not the guaranteed prices?—I might say on reflection that when I said I would let the Corn Production Act take its course I was under the impression that the price for next year was 55s., but I find now on looking at the Corn Production Act that this is the last year when we guarantee 55s. I would therefore like to revise my suggestion, and I would be quite prepared that it should be a guarantee of 55s. next year. I certainly thought it had another year to run at 55s., until I looked it up.

8501. Perhaps this is not a fair question to ask you, but it is my last question. I suppose you rather regret now that there is no clause in the Corn Production Act to prevent landlords from raising their rents—no effective clause? I think it is effective inasmuch as it says they shall not raise them because of any benefit they get out of the Corn Production Act; therefore, it is effective in that way.

8502. But it is only effective on paper; it is not really effective?—But the moment you let the Corn Production Act come into operation, it will be effective.

8503. But the Government really allow the non-producer to come off best under this Act, I mean the landlord; he has been able to raise his rents and breed as many pheasants as he likes although the Government is keen about the production of food?—I think the landlord with regard to game has played the game during the war.

8504. But he is still allowed to go on breeding?—Yes, but he has very much reduced it.

8505. But there is no law to prevent him from doing so in the future?—Not at all. That is what I fear. Now that the war is over gamekeepers will be appointed, and we shall have to go over the whole thing again.

8506. I happen to know a small farmer who has been evicted to give place to a gamekeeper?—I am not surprised.

8507. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: I understand that you are satisfied with the Corn Production limit being 55s.?—Yes, for another year. Instead of it stopping at 55s. in 1919, I think it might stop in 1920.

8508. Have any of your people made any claim under the Corn Production Act?—No; because the prices have always been higher than the minimum.

8509. For how many years would you suggest that this minimum or guarantee should continue?—For the period of the Corn Production Act, which is until 1922, I think.

8510. You would not carry it further?—No, I would not at present.

8511. When normal times come and foreign competition begins to act, what then?—That I should leave to the future. I would not legislate too far in advance. That secures the farmer till 1922; then I would wait and see.

8512. Your view is that at all events until 1922, the world's prices will be considerably above the guarantee that you suggest?—I think so. I shall be surprised if they are not.

8513. I made a suggestion—I do not know how it will strike you—that if a guarantee should be given by way of insurance to the farmer for a guarantee of 55s., and that for anything that they sell beyond that value they should pay a premium to the Government for their insurance of something like 1s. or 2s. a quarter, rising according to the high price. I see you smile?—You would have the fat in the fire.

8514. I am not afraid of the fat being in the fire?—I do not think that is a workable proposition.

8515. Lots of propositions do not seem workable until you have tried them. Now you were speaking about feeding stuffs. Of course, the price of feeding stuff is abnormal, as we all know. Of course, you know the true principal reason for the high price of linseed oil cake?—I suppose we have not been getting our supplies of linseed at all from Russia.

8516. We have not been getting any linseed at all from Russia; but when peace comes to that country, I presume that linseed will come in and these prices will go down?—I hope so.

8517. But I take it from you that from your experience you yourself do not take a pessimistic view of the prospects of the farmers raising cereals in this country?—I do not; on the contrary.

8518. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: You stated that you took over, I think, 1,000 acres from the Crown first of all for the purpose of small holdings?—Yes.

8519. And previously these 1,000 acres were cultivated by one farmer and 10 labourers?—Yes.

8520. And now you have 39 families and allotments, as a matter of fact?—Yes.

8521. How many people does that represent?—I think the total number is 290 persons altogether. I think we have close on 80 tenants there altogether. I can supply you with the exact figures if you wish.†

8522. If you please. Did these smallholders introduce any changes in cultivation on that piece of land?—Yes. When we took this land over 10 years ago it was practically farmed almost in a four-course system. The farmer did grow a few potatoes, not a great many. The whole of this 100 acres of fruit has been planted, and that is the chief alteration in the industry. We are now producing many tons of raspberries, strawberries, black currants, apples, and plums, which are now coming into full bearing.

† *See* Appendix No. IV.

8523. So that is really the final change that has been introduced?—Yes, that is the great change.

8524. Have you any means of comparing the amount produced on the other 900 acres with the amount produced now, leaving out the fruit area?—Some of the men who are now smallholders were workmen on the farm, and they all tell me that the land is producing at least 50 per cent. more than it did under previous management.

8525. About 50 per cent. more?—Yes, the crops are very much bigger.

8526. Have you any means of comparing the cost of production then with the cost of production now?—No; of course, during those days wages were about 2s. 6d. a day.

8527. So that it is quite conceivable that the cost of production per unit under the old system was much less than it was even before war prices?—Yes. I should think we are spending as much in labour on the 120 acres that we run as a co-partnership area on that part as he did on the whole farm.

8528. You said in reply to another Commissioner, that you were of opinion that the cost of production was greater on large holdings than on small holdings.

Chairman: I do not think he said that.

8529. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: I think he said so in reply to Dr. Douglas?—I do not think I quite put it like that.

8530. I think Dr. Douglas put the question to you in that form and you agreed?

8531. *Dr. Douglas*: I think I referred in my question to the productiveness of labour?—Yes, to the productiveness of labour.

8532. And the answer was that the labour on smallholdings was more efficient than on large holdings?—That is how I understood your question.

8533. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: But would you agree that the cost of production in this particular case was larger on the small holding than on the large one?—In some cases, yes; in other cases, no. If a farmer has five or six farms, he is paying for management, and that has to be taken into account.

8534. Which of these two systems, the small holding and the large holding, would yield the largest quantity of produce on the market for consumers per individual?—I think the small holding, certainly.

8535. You have no figures for that, have you?—No, I have no figures.

8536. *Mr. Dallas*: You are familiar with the terms of reference to this Commission: to deal with the economic prospects of agriculture in the future?—Quite.

8537. Apart from guarantees, is there anything that you can suggest that would help farming in the future, or give stability to agriculture in the future?—Apart from guarantees?

8538. Yes?—I have always been an advocate for security of tenure, and the setting up of a Land Court to which the tenant can appeal in case his rent is raised unduly. I think the proposal in the Welsh Land Commission, which was held some years ago, was an excellent idea.

8539. We have statements like this made to us: that "unless we get guarantees we will not cultivate the land, or at any rate, we will not put the land down to cultivation"?—I do not hold that view.

8540. You have a very long experience and a very broad experience of the industry. Looking for some years ahead, do you think the farmer will manage along alright without any subsidy from the taxpayer?—I am quite sure of it. I should question whether he wants it really, if it was put to him baldly.

8541. You do not think he wants it?—I do not think he wants a subsidised industry.

8542. We have been told repeatedly by witnesses that unless definite guarantees and assurances were given which might result in subsidies, and in some cases actually were subsidies, the land will go out of cultivation. You do not agree with that?—No, I do not agree with that.

8543. *Mr Prosser Jones*: Would you tell the Commission what these people were doing prior to taking up small holdings?—90 per cent. of them were ordinary agricultural labourers.

8544. Practical men?—Yes, practical men. One of them was a platelayer on the railway. He had had previous experience in farming as a young man working on a farm. I should think probably altogether seven or eight of them were men who had experience on the railway and wished to come back to the land.

8545. How would these people manage; would they borrow money for this purpose?—No. They all had a little capital; and in some cases, where we were quite sure of our men we trusted them with the inventory, the tenant right, for the first year or so, and they paid it off by instalments.

8546. I think you are an advocate of small holdings?—Yes, I am; on suitable land.

8547. Would you mind telling us now, if you had the opportunity of reverting back these 2,300 acres, would you allow them to go back to one large farm or would you still retain small holdings under present conditions?—I would still retain them, certainly.

8548. And would you break up further large farms?—I would, especially where men have got four or five farms; I should have no hesitation.

8549. Are there any failures in your records concerning these men?—We had, I think, on the whole about three failures.

8550. Out of how many?—Out of the 290 tenants. To my recollection—I am speaking from memory—there were two men I had to get rid of because of their drunken habits, and one man who ran away because he could not get on with his wife; so he bolted. I think I am right in saying that those are the only three cases where we have lost tenants.

8551. Do you find a demand for small holdings?—I find it greater than ever in this district.

8552. Are you able to meet the demand?—Now, you see, this Association of mine is coming to a stop, as it were, because we are passing them all on to the County Council. This Association started when the County Council had no power to create small holdings, or when it would not put the 1892 Act into force. The 1892 Small Holding Act was merely a permissive measure, as you know; there was no compulsion behind it, and as the men could not get land I started this Association; but now we pass them all on to the County Council.

8553. Is the County Council likely to do as well as this Association?—They are a little more expensive in their management; they put on 15 per cent. for their management. I reckon we manage this for 5 per cent.

8554. What is your experience of the farmer working under the County Councils? Is it not a fact that quite a large number of County Councillors are adverse to small holdings?—They do not say so now openly.

8555. What is your experience?—I often wonder whether they still think so. They were opposed to me when I was Chairman of the Small Holdings Committee in this very area. I was the first Chairman of the Small Holdings Committee and they bitterly opposed me; but they are giving it lip service now, at any rate.

8556. I thought possibly from the fact that quite a large number of applicants are continually on the books of the County Councils?—They might move much faster, if they would.

8557. Then with regard to the efficiency of the workers on large farms as compared with these small holders. I take it that there is no cause for complaint in connection with these people who work their own holdings; they do it in their own interest, I take it?—Yes, they do it in their own interest. Of course there are some of them even there who are better than others. There are some better farmers than others; but we have no hesitation when we see a man is not farming up to what we call a good standard, in telling him he has got to improve, and if he does not he will cease to be a tenant.

8558. Is there anyone supervising these groups of holdings, or does each man supervise his own work?—Each man supervises his own work, and then we have a steward who looks after the whole thing. He goes in and out amongst them.

8559. Do you find any improvement in the status of these people once they take up their own holdings, I mean as citizens as compared with the ordinary farm

worker; are they better citizens?—Honestly, I am a little disappointed with that aspect of the small holder. He is inclined to be too self-centred, and not to take sufficient public interest, as I think he ought to do, in the welfare of the district, and generally what I call the social and moral improvement of the community. He is a little too self-centred. I have been obliged to come to that conclusion after 25 years' experience. It is one of my disappointments.

8560. He is a little more devoted to his own holding?—He is a little too selfish, if I may say so; but, mark you, I do not say if he had been an agricultural labourer he would have been any better; I do not think he would; but he has not quite risen as I should like to have seen him rise in that scale of being a better member of the community.

8561. *Mr. Lennard*: Mr. Cautley examined you a little while ago on the profits that you show on these figures, and he seemed to think that the profits were excessive. There is just one point I want to ask you about, if I may. It is on your Norfolk figures, paragraph (7), third year, an acre of barley following mangolds. I notice you put down the value of your 5¼ quarters at 70s. a quarter?—Yes; that is very low. Of course I was anxious to be accurate; but I may say that the very day I interviewed this man, I came up in the train with a farmer who told me that he had sold his barley at 90s., and I believe that this man will make 90s. on his barley for malting purposes. I understand that Bass's people are giving up to 100s. a quarter for malting barley.

8562. Yes; that is the point I want to bring out. I noticed the price the last few days of 90s. up to 100s. That would of course increase your profit very considerably?—If this man makes another £1 a quarter, it will put another £5 10s. 0d. on to it.

8563. You said just now in answer to one of the Commissioners, that you consider the future of English agriculture will be prosperous?—I said that I look forward to the future without any fear.

8564. Do you hold that opinion specifically of tillage farming?—I do; that is the farming I know most about. I know very little about grazing.

8565. I understand that you do not consider any guarantee higher than 55s. necessary for next year, and that you would not prolong the 45s. guarantee of the Corn Production Act beyond 1922?—I say I would not begin to legislate until I got much nearer 1922 than to-day.

8566. You would not at present contemplate any extension of the 45s. guarantee?—No; I would not at present contemplate it. I say that to move step by step is in my judgment the wisest thing to do.

8567. Many of us here are inclined to think that the world prices of cereals will continue to make cereal production profitable in the future; but we feel some doubts as to whether the farmer believes that; so the question arises whether a guarantee of, say, 60s. for wheat for four years, may not be necessary to save the country from the farmers' ignorance of the world's price, and to prevent his timidity leading to an entirely unnecessary reduction of the arable area?—I think the farmer puts on that timidity. I do not think it actually exists, from what I know of him. I have a good deal of conversation with farmers; a good many of them are personal friends of mine. I have two brothers-in-law farming, and a nephew. I know pretty well what is in their minds. I do not always take what they say for granted in that respect.

8568. What effect do you think a guarantee such as I have named is likely to have upon the efficiency of farming?—The chief fear I have myself about guarantees is that they may make the poor farmers feel too secure. They may enable such men to make a living without improving their methods?—Yes. I laid special stress on that: that Part IV of the Corn Production Act ought to be ruthlessly put into operation, and that we ought not to give these guarantees to those people who do farm their land badly. We ought to penalise those men.

8569. From your experience of County Councils and County Committees, do you think it is likely that such powers would be used effectively? During the war the War Agricultural Committees have done their work splendidly, and have insisted on better farming in many cases. It is a disagreeable business; and whether those same men will continue to do it now that the war is over and there is no fear—of course, it was fear that was at the back of it—whether they would continue to do that which I call disagreeable work, is doubtful. I wish they would. I think we ought to try and get the best kind of Agricultural Committee set up that we can, and give them the power under that Part IV of the Corn Production Act, and level up those bad farmers.

8570. I understood you just now to advocate a Land Court to fix rents?—No, not to fix rents—as a court of appeal. Ultimately, it would fix rents, of course, if there were a disagreement.

8571. Have you any fear that the existence of such a Land Court might lead some farmers to farm with a view to winning the Court's pity at their distresses. I think that has been suggested as a result in Ireland?—I think that the result of that would be, that instead of a farmer farming under a lease, or where he has a fear that the place may be sold and therefore he is farming to leave, as it were, running his farm to leave, as we call it, to some extent, if he knew he could go to a Land Court and have a fair rent adjusted, providing there is a difference with his landlord, I think it would improve general good farming.

8572. You do not think there is any real danger of his relying upon winning a reduction of rent rather than upon his own enterprise?—I do not think so, if the court were properly constituted.

8573. *Mr. Nicholls*: With regard to dairying, I thought there was a hint earlier on that these little men do not keep the proportion of cows they ought to on their holdings?—The answer I gave was, that I found they had a tendency to decrease during the war rather than to increase; so our steward says.

8574. In that area, do you know of any large farmers who go in for dairying?—No; it is not worth their while; they do not bother about it.

8575. It is not a dairying district?—No. In the case of a large farmer who has 4 or 5 farms, all he does is to keep one cow to supply milk to the labourers. You can go to farm after farm and you will not find a cow upon it.

8576. Then there was a hint that these men on the smallholdings and their families have a very hard time of it; and I think you suggested that some of the young men do leave the holdings and go off to the towns to get away from them?—I do not think it is to get away from the hard work; I think it is to get away from parental control. That is only in some cases. But I have one or two cases in my mind where young men have gone away; and that is the reason they have given, that their father would not pay them as they thought they ought to be paid.

8577. Is it within your experience that these men who do go away, say some of them to railways and others to other centres, if the father dies or if he retires from a holding, are among the first applicants to come back for his holding?—They are, yes; that is true.

8578. So that it is quite clear that they do like the smallholder's life, hard as it is?—Yes. I do not think it is excessively hard myself. They have a day off when they like; and most of them go to market now one day a week.

8579. The suggestion was that they put in a tremendous lot of overtime, and do not charge for it in the accounts that are rendered each month?—A good many of us put in overtime, but we are none the less happy for it.

8580. But is not it the fact that that overtime is compensated for to some extent by the fact that these men and their wives, too, trot off when they like to anything that is going on without asking, and that they really work not to clock time, but to the needs of their holding, which is a very different thing?—Quite. When they want to go to an agricultural show or a flower show they have a day off.

8581. And with regard to the daughters, it is hinted that it is a slave's life; but is it not a fact that generally these young men who go to the towns come back to these places for their wives?—Yes; they are good judges.

8582. One word about the census returns. I do not know whether I quite understand you. Do not they actually prove that during this period of 25 years in which the holdings have developed, the actual number of people living in the same area has largely increased?—Yes. I got the census returns first for 1881; that was the low-water mark. Then 1891, where there had been a very slight increase; and then 1901, which showed a considerable increase, and that confirmed at the next census. I took the census of 17 parishes, I think, around these holdings.

8583. And did you find that there was quite a large number of applicants for the land before war conditions came on; I mean the applications have been standing for a long time?—Yes.

8584. It was not really war conditions that made them keen?—No, not at all.

8585. *Mr. Parker*: I think you told us that the figures you put before us are the estimates supplied to you by the smallholders?—Yes.

8586. They are mere estimates; I think you said so once or twice?—I do not say they are mere estimates; because the 1913 figures are actual figures, and 1919, of course, is an estimate, taking the prices of last year as a guide.

8587. Do these men keep any accounts?—Yes.

8588. As Chairman of the Norfolk and Lincolnshire Smallholders' Association, I suppose you have taken considerable care not to buy or hire any land unsuitable for smallholders?—I would not call the Norfolk land most suitable, but it was all that we could buy at that time. We had to buy those three farms, I may say.

8589. But that does not compare with the Deeping Farm or the Wingland Farm?—No. The land in Norfolk cost us about £20 an acre, and the Lincolnshire land was worth certainly 50 per cent. more at that time.

8590. You would agree that the success or non-success of small holders depends almost entirely upon the class of land upon which they are put?—Yes, I think so.

8591. That is so in several neighbourhoods, I know. It is absolutely necessary to have very good land?—Not very good land. I say that the small holder can live on ordinary land; but he naturally does better on good land, as we all do.

8592. Now the Willow Tree Farm in Deeping Fen, Lincolnshire, you say was purchased from Lord Lincolnshire at £26 an acre?—No; we only leased that from him. I say the adjoining farm had been sold to the Lincolnshire County Council a year before the war at £26 an acre, and this is a similar farm.

8593. What was the rent of the Deeping Farm an acre—the present rent?—About 30s.

8594. What would the rent of that farm be to-day?—We have not increased the rent.

8595. No; but I want to know what you think the farm would let for to-day?—I think we could let this farm to-day easily for 50s. an acre.

8596. Not more?—It would be a fair rent. A man would get a fair rent if he paid 50s. an acre.

8597. It is some of the finest land in Lincolnshire, is not it?—No. This Deeping Fen is not anything like as good as what we have at Holbeach, where land is making £100 an acre.

8598. It is not so good as the Norfolk farm?—No; it is not so well drained.

8599. But it would let for £2 10s. an acre, and in the charge made to your tenants the rent is put at £2?—Yes.

8600. The rent really would be £2 10s.?—Yes.

8601. Then the Wingland Farm?—With regard to the Wingland Farm, we all agreed to the market price. The outgoing tenant was paying practically £1 an acre; £1,000 for the farm, and the Crown then asked us to pay, I think it was, about 32s. Then we have got to pay extra for the equipment.

8602. But 32s. does not at all represent the present rental value of that farm, does it?—They built us something like over 20 houses, on which we have got to pay 5 per cent.

8603. But the land would let for £3 an acre now, would not it?—I think it would quite.

8604. It is some of the very best land you can possibly have—Wingland?—It is a little too silty; it is not the best. There is much better land near to. I should think there is some land which is worth 10s. an acre more than this, which the Crown has close to. All this land was covered by the sea in the time of King John; it is at The Wash; and it is wonderful how it varies. It so happens that a good deal of this 1,000 acres is rather on the silty side; it does not grow such heavy crops of potatoes.

8605. Would you agree that the County Councils in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire and the Small Holders' Association, are gradually acquiring for smallholders a great part of the very best land in those counties?—No. Really, if you work out the percentage, it is very small still.

8606. You think so?—I not only think so, but I know. If you take the total acreage of the parishes and you find out what we have in smallholdings, it will not come to more than 5 per cent.

8607. All three County Councils are buying very heavily, are they not?—Yes; but the Norfolk County Council, I think I am right in saying, have still less than 10,000 acres. In Norfolk there are over a million acres, I think. I am speaking from memory; but it is not 5 per cent. of the whole, I can assure you.

8608. At the same time you agree that the effect is that when a farmer is turned out he probably has to seek a holding where the land is much inferior?—No, I do not think so at all. Most of the farmers who have been turned out have got equally good farms.

8609. It is not so in my neighbourhood?—What neighbourhood is that?

8610. Take what is going on in Huntingdonshire?—Of course, there they have bought land down at Ramsey. I do not think we have got more than 5 per cent. of the land in Ramsey in smallholdings yet.

8611. What are they spending now—a very large sum, is it not?—Yes; we are buying a good deal of land from Lord de Ramsey. But when you come to take the whole acreage of the parishes there, you will find that it does not come to more than 5 per cent.

8612. Are the farmers giving up the land willingly, or some of them under compulsory orders?—Some under compulsory orders; but most of them have made their fortunes, so there is not much to grumble about.

8613. I suppose you would agree that the profits from the land in the hands of the smallholders in those counties are not at all comparable with the profits that can be made on the light lands?—No; the former is the very cream of the district for smallholders.

8614. That is the gist of the whole thing: that the good land has a better yield, and therefore the smallholder does well?—Yes; but he has not got his share of it yet. He has only got 5 per cent. of it. I shall not be satisfied until he gets nearer 25 per cent. of it.

8615. We have evidence before us of average yield of corn per acre based on 13,500 acres in Norfolk; and the average yield of wheat was only 21·42 bushels; of oats, 46·14 bushels; of barley, 18.29 bushels, and of rye 14·03 bushels. That is far below the yield that your smallholders get?—Yes. It depends entirely upon where that district is. If it is in a very poor district in Norfolk, in one of these huge game preserving districts, I am not at all surprised at that low yield, because no self-respecting farmer would go into those districts.

8616. I see the profits you show are £2 5s. 10d. per acre, which your man made in 1913, against £4 0s. 4d. per acre this year?—Is this Lincolnshire or Norfolk?

8617. It is Lincolnshire, page 4. Considering the depreciated purchasing power of money that is not a very great profit, is it? I mean the £2 5s. 10d. in 1913 is just as good as the £4 0s. 4d. at the present time?—It is not if you want to invest your profits in War Loan. If you invest £4 in War Loan, that brings you in better interest than £2 5s. 10d. would. Supposing that is a profit which he has to invest in 1914, he would get 4 per cent. or perhaps

3 per cent. on £2 5s., and now he can get 5 per cent. on £4. It all depends what he is going to do with it.

8618. Then you express a general opinion that the increased value of agricultural land is an infallible index—I think were your words—of the general prosperity of agriculture. Do not you think there are many other contributory causes?—Yes; I do not say "causes"; I say this is an infallible index; I do not say it is a cause. Causes of course are very different; but I say it is an infallible sign, if you like, or index.

8619. These large prices given by farmers are induced or caused by competition by the County Council for one reason, and by land syndicates entering in for another reason, are not they?—Not at all. On the other hand, here are some big farmers ready to sell to the County Council. In Lincolnshire, where we are talking about, there are four cases of farmers who have offered their farms to the County Council voluntarily, not by compulsion. Here is Mr. H. P. Carter who offers a farm at Holbeach at £83 the acre. There is another, Mr. Porter, who offers his farm at £55 an acre. It says here: "Mr. Porter declined to accept less than £55 the acre." That is in this very Deeping district, the very next farm to the farm of Lord Lincolnshire's. Then Mr. George Thompson offers his farm at £90 the acre. Here are these men who have been farming this land, and they ought to know the value of it. They have been making money these last four years, and they are prepared to sell.

8620. That may be a special instance; but are not County Councils going into the auction room and bidding for land?—Yes, they are.

8621. That in itself would tend to put up the price?—You see here where they do not go into the auction room, they are asked very heavy prices. The last case is Mr. Sidney Worth, who asks £63 the acre. In all those cases it was proved to the Board of Agriculture, who have the facts, that those farmers bought those farms some time before the war at about £2 the acre less than they are now asking.

8622. I agree; but I put it to you that the price of land must be affected by the competition of the County Council, and by those land speculators coming in?—Yes, I think it is; I quite agree to that.

8623. It must be so?—But it is not correct to say that because you use compulsory powers, you naturally go and give an excessive price. These excessive prices are being asked here in the open market without auctions at all.

8624. I will ask you this question: Would you, as Chairman of the Lincolnshire and Norfolk Association, now sanction the acquisition of land for smallholders at anything up to £100 the acre, the sort of price you intimated?—No. That is the reason I reluctantly voted against the Third Reading of the Land Acquisition Bill. We could not get it altered in Committee; and I was one of those few, I am afraid—but I do not think I shall ever regret the vote, and it is the only vote I have ever given against this Coalition Government—but I went in to the Lobby against that Land Acquisition Bill, because I felt we were going to put ourselves into considerable difficulties.

8625. You would consider it rash to give anything like those prices?—Yes, I do.

8626. And therefore you would say that the willingness of the farmer to give such prices does not altogether depend on his taking a very cheerful view of the prospects of agriculture?—Of course, if a man is spending his own money he does as he likes; and if he has made money out of farming, and he likes to go and buy a third or fourth farm, if he does drop a bit of money over it it does not put him in a difficulty; but it is a very different thing for the State to buy land at that price.

8627. I just want to ask you about the yield of potatoes last year. You put them at 6 tons per acre, and a value of £8 per ton?—Yes, that is what he made in April.

8628. That is Lincolnshire land?—Yes.

8629. Last year the Government took over the whole crop at a price varying between £6 and £8 a ton, did not they?—I never quite understood what the Government did do with regard to potatoes. All I know is that it has cost the nation a million of money. They made a nice muddle of it, I am afraid.

8630. The value is put in your estimate at £8. Have you any opinion of what the price of potatoes would have been last year but for the Government having undertaken to take the crop?—I should think it might have got up to £10 a ton.

8631. You do not think they would have fallen to as low as £3 or £4?—No, I think they would have gone up rather than down.

8632. That is not the general opinion?—If they could have got them away. You see, there was a great shortage of trucks to get them away.

8633. Then do you think the price this year is going to be anything like £8?—I travelled last night with a man who came up from Spalding Market yesterday, and he told me they were giving £10 a ton for potatoes in Spalding yesterday. That is for Second Earlies.

8634. There were some questions asked by Mr. Langford which were answered by you, and I think you rather agreed with him that the landlords were taking advantage of the present time to put up their rents unfairly?—No. If that was the interpretation that was placed upon it, I do not wish to have that interpretation put upon it. Mr. Langford may have put that question to me; but I do not think there has been anything really unfair with regard to the landlords putting up the rents. If I had been a landlord, I should have put up my rent a bit. In fact I have in some cases where I knew it was under rented, and I think quite fairly too.

8635. Do you remember the period between 1879 and 1890?—I can go back to 1868. I was then 10 years of age.

8636. I did not like to ask you that question?—It was the best year's farming my father ever had in 1868.

8637. A reverse took place in those years?—Then it went on from 1868 to 1874, when he had six good years.

8638. They were all reducing their rents in those years?—When?

8639. Between 1879 and 1890?—No, they gave abatements, but a great many of them did not reduce. I thought it was an unwise proceeding; but they took off 10 per cent., and so on. Take Lord Lincolnshire's farms. Those rents were never altered: all they did was to give an abatement. It amounted to the same thing, but it was not really reduction.

8640. It was the same thing?—No, it was not exactly the same thing, because they waited until a great many of the farmers were impoverished before they did it. If they had done it early it would have saved a good deal of anxiety, and I may say, almost bankruptcy; but they waited too long I think.

8641. Did they not meet the situation then generally by giving the abatements, or, as I say, reducing rents and by letting the farmers off their leases?—Yes, the large landowners.

8642. Do you think the landlord is only now getting back to the position he was in in 1870 to 1874?—I should very much question whether the landowner has yet got back to the position he was in in 1874; because he has done all his improvements since then and got very little interest for it.

8643. And the farmer who is said to have done so well now owing to the increase in prices, is probably getting back to his pre-1879 position?—The farmer is?

8644. Yes?—The farmers are better off than they were in those days, and education has done a great deal for them. They are not spending so recklessly. In those days they were very reckless.

8645. What I meant was, that the farmer who had lost nearly all his capital in 1880 to 1890, is now recovering it and getting back to the position he was in?—He has got beyond that. I have seen it.

8646. I have seen figures which show the contrary?—You may find one odd man. We are talking, of course, about the general run, and not taking any particular odd man.

8646A. *Mr. Robbins*: You told us that you still consider that farming is one of the best businesses under the sun?—I do.

8647. Are you able to resist the temptation to embark upon it?—I have always dabbled in farming.

8648. You have had the experience?—Yes, I have been through all these years.

8649. I want to take you just for one moment to an item in your statement as to the first year costs of producing wheat at Swaffham Farm. I understood you to say when it was pointed out, that neither 4 cwt. of basic slag nor 1 cwt. of sulphate of ammonia could be purchased in 1919 for the sum you put down—namely, 14s. That was a typist's error, and the word "or" ought to be put in?—That is what I think; but I am going to discover it and let you know.

8650. You mean it would not much matter whether he put on basic slag or sulphate of ammonia?—I am not sufficiently a chemist to say, because I do not know what that land specially wants.

8651. "Or" implies that, does not it?—Yes, it does.

8652. It looks as if your smallholder manures on the formula that they use in some dispensaries. Any blessed thing; and that he considers that it does not matter whether he uses phosphatic manure or a nitrogenous manure. I am afraid that explanation would not do?—Very well then; I must clear that point up.*

8653. You told us that in your judgment labour on the smallholding is more productive per unit. Would you develop that view a little, and tell us why you say that?—If you see a smallholder working on his holding, and then go and see the hired man working on a farm, you soon discover the difference; it is patent. The smallholder seems to have got more muscle somehow. He can dig deeper.

8654. You told us that with a view to encouraging the development of the smallholding movement, the State has agreed to subsidise it?—Yes, that is what it will amount to under the Land Settlement Act. You see, the land is to be bought now at its present war price. Then they are to equip it, which will be most expensive: then it is to be let at an economic rent, and the State will stand the loss for five years.

8655. You mean an uneconomic rent?—Yes, uneconomic in that way: but to be let at a fair rent. Then there will be a loss; and the Board of Agriculture are to bear that loss for five years, and at the end of the five years that land is to be revalued to the County Council at its then price, and that is where the loss will come in.

8656. Do you think, having regard to the present price of land and the present cost of building, it would be reasonable to expect any development of the Smallholding movement if the State did not do that? In other words, could the smallholder pay an economic rent, having regard to the price of land and the cost of building?—No, I do not think he could. At the present price of land and the present cost of buildings, I do not see how County Councils will be able to supply the men other than ex-soldiers.

8657. Then does it not follow, that although it may be his own fault that the farmer does it, the prospect of a man who has to buy land at the present price, and farm it, is not very much better?—If he has to put up expensive buildings; but if you buy a farm you buy it fully equipped. It is the equipment which costs the money to-day.

8658. Not always?—Generally. They will not put in more equipment. They will make it manage.

8659. You agree they have to pay pretty tall prices for the land?—Yes; but they would not spend any money on the equipment. A man buys a farm, and that is the end of his expense. But you see, if you buy, say, to-day 40 acres of land at £50 the acre, for a small holder that is £2,000. If you buy it at £100 an acre that is £4,000; and it will require £1,000 to equip it. It is terrible.

8660. I agree. You do think that the Corn Production Act falls short of perfection to this extent, that the figure for 1920 needs amendment to the extent of 10s.?—Yes; that Corn Production Act was passed in 1917, and we did not know as much then as we know to-day.

8661. I take it your view is this, that the economic prospects are such that the State would be warranted in increasing the guarantee next year to the extent of 10s.?—I think the State would be warranted in keeping the present guarantee of 1919 for another year.

8662. That would amount to an increase of another 10s. on the figure mentioned?—Yes, it would; and that is as far as I go.

8663. After that, you would give the farmer 45s.?—Yes.

8664. And you would rigorously enforce the Corn Production Act?—Yes. As far as I am watching the country, I cannot see any steps being taken to do it. That is my regret.

8665. I thought the Agricultural Committees had done their work very well?—Yes, they did during the war; but it seems to have lapsed, and nothing has taken its place.

8666. I want to be clear about this. Part IV., Section 9, Sub-section (1) (*b*) of the Act, reads as follows: "That for the purpose of increasing in the national interest the production of food, the mode of cultivating any land or the use to which any land is being put should be changed." If that is the view of the Committee, they have power under this Section to order such a change in the method of cultivation?—Quite.

8667. Do you suggest with a guarantee of 45s., and the price of labour which you say is not coming down remaining at its present figure, a farmer should be called upon to alter the mode of his cultivation? I know that the Section also says he must cultivate according to the rules of good husbandry, which is quite a different thing?—Quite. I think that that other clause wants using, naturally with discretion.

8668. Very great discretion, do not you think?—Yes, very great discretion. I think you could trust the local Committees though; they are all sensible people.

8669. *Mr. Smith*: I think you told us the small holder lived at a higher standard than the ordinary labourer?—Yes, certainly.

8670. Is not that explained by the reason that he works better?—Yes, I think he does.

8671. And a higher standing for labour might produce better results also?—I do not know. I think it is only human nature—I wish it were not so, but I am afraid it is—to work better for yourself than you do for other people. That has been my experience in 50 years of life; and I think it is the experience of most of us sitting here.

8672. From one of your previous answers, I think you agree that it is a good thing for labour to be well paid?—Yes.

8673. With regard to this speculation in land, in so far as any speculation can take place in agricultural land, the basis upon which the whole thing rests would be the value of agriculture as an industry, would not it?—The basis is the value of agricultural produce, yes. There is nothing else that has increased the price of land except the price of agricultural produce and the profits arising.

8674. But even if speculators force the price up, they are basing their judgment upon the future of the industry —Yes, quite.

8675. As to the figures as regards population, did you make any comparison between the areas covered by the small holders and the adjoining areas which were under ordinary farmers?—No, I did not. I took either 17 or 19 parishes round Spalding, and I took the census returns for those years each decade; but I have never been in any other district where there are no small holdings and taken the records.

8676. You could not say from those figures?—I can say, for my own constituency in South-West Norfolk, where there are very few small holdings, that the rural poulation has declined each census during the whole of the time I have been there.

8677. Were these figures taken from the Lincolnshire area?—Yes.

8678. You would have to make a comparison with adjoining areas, where the land and conditions are practically the same, in order to get a comparison?—On adjoining areas we also have small holdings.

8679. Do I understand from you that some of these men have made such a success of their holdings, that they have practically capitalised them out of their

* *See* Appendix No. IV.

holdings? I think you said something about them having gone in without any capital and paid so much a year?—Yes. I had in mind at that time a man named Haylock at Watton, who took a farmhouse and 30 acres of land. He was an agricultural labourer, and I think he has reared 10 children in this house. He had such a small amount of capital that we trusted him with his tenant right for two years, which he then repaid to us. He has now during the war taken a 200 acre farm from Lord Walsingham; and we have admitted his soldier son, who has just been demobilised, into the father's small holding, and that has been done in 19 years.

8680. You stated that you were quite content to trust the future, if the 55s. was extended another year. Is that the opinion of the men who are on these holdings?—As far as I have gathered it, I do not think these men want any subsidy. They have no fear for the future—not one of them. I have discussed it with lots of them, and I cannot find any man who has any fear for the future.

8681. And you do not think there is in the mind of the small holder any lack of confidence in the future?—No.

8682. Would you say the same of the farmer?—In their heart of hearts I do not think they have.

8683. You mean that they do not always express what they really think?—That is so. If they can get anything out of the Government, of course they will.

8684. In regard to those future prices, of course on the figures you have produced these holdings would not show a profit if the costs remain the same?—That is so.

8685. But is it your opinion that the prices of corn can only go down at the same time other prices go down which produce costs?—Directly the prices of corn go down, the cost of team labour will go down. It is horses which eat so much of the corn; and if they are eating oats at 60s. or 70s., it makes team labour very expensive indeed, and, after all, it is the team labour which is the most expensive labour.

8686. I noticed Mr. Cautley put this question to you, but did not seem to follow it up sufficiently; and I wanted to know whether it was in your mind that the price of corn could not go down without the cost of keeping horses and generally the cost of the work on the farm also going down?—Yes, that is so.

8687. In your experience have you come across any element, outside of the farmers or small holders themselves, that might be developed to help farming? Take the question of transport as an illustration. Do you know of anything beside transport that might be developed which would help it?—Of course there are many ways in which we might and ought to help agriculture. I have a huge tract of beautiful land in my constituency, where the roads are impassible in winter. If a man does not thresh directly after harvest and get his corn in and get whatever the market price is then, he is done until the spring. I have thousands of acres like that in my constituency. Now you may take all that land round the Marsh districts in Lincolnshire as being very similar. That is the question of transport. Then of course with regard to railway facilities, there again we might help.

8688. And you think the industry could be considerably helped in that direction?—I am sure it could.

8689. Which in the end might reduce the cost of production?—Would reduce it.

Chairman: Dr. Douglas wishes to ask a supplementary question.

8690. *Dr. Douglas*: I want to go back on one or two questions which were put to you, and were not in your original evidence. For example, you express an opinion in favour of Land Nationalisation.—It was Mr. Langford who led me up to it, and he asked me what remedy I suggested, and I said Land Nationalisation; and, of course, I believe Land Nationalisation would be a remedy.

8691. I do not want to examine you on that subject at this late hour; but I want to put it to you that you have not put forward in your evidence any scheme on that subject?—No.

8692. You would not expect this Commission to consider it in the absence of that?—No, I do not think it is ripe for settlement. I am a member of the Land Nationalisation Society; but I want to do it piecemeal.

8693. We could not consider the matter without having a scheme put before us?—Quite.

8694. And that would apply also to any comprehensive treatment of land tenure, would it not?—Yes, of course; and of Land Courts.

8695. Then one other point. You have spoken of the great appreciation of rental in consequence of the improvement of agricultural prices. I suppose you agree that rent is in large measure an interest on capital spent on equipping land?—Yes. I never suggested that the landowners are getting an unreasonable interest. I do not think they are.

8696. That is what I wanted to ask you. Do you suggest the proprietors now are getting something more than a normal rate of interest, such as would be obtained on an industrial investment?—I certainly do not. I think before the war they were getting less a good deal.

Chairman: We are very much obliged to you. You have given us most interesting evidence.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Mr. FALCONER L. WALLACE, late Investigator to the Agricultural Wages Board, called and examined.

8697. *Chairman*: You have been kind enough to give us certain statements of evidence, which consist of a printed statement and particulars as to the cost of growing an acre of wheat, and a letter of yours of the 23rd August, 1919, with a excerpt from your report upon wages and conditions of employment of agriculture in Northamptonshire in March, 1918.* May I put these in as part of your evidence?—Yes. I also, if I may say so, gave a large bundle of very detailed statements and individual accounts, which I was unable to get copied in time, to the secretaries, which are in their office. They are actual statements from which I have compiled these statistics, and a great many points which may occur to some of the gentlemen on the Commission in connection with the statistics can be answered by reference to the detailed statements in which I have described the system of farming upon the individual farms, the land, the conditions of pay, and the labour employed upon those farms. There are also several costs of production last year of several crops in detail. There is a very important statement showing the cost of producing meat on a feeding farm in Northumberland, with every single item the whole of the process being worked out in detail, and a great many interesting statements in connection with all the classes of farming.

Evidence-in-chief handed in by Witness.

8698. *Importance of Capital.*—In considering farming profits, it may be borne in mind that much of a farmer's profits are derived from selling and buying at the psychological moment. It is then easy to understand one reason why the farming business that has an ample working capital has such a great advantage over the business that is less fortunately equipped. It is unquestionable that farming was, up to 1914, for a great number of years immensely handicapped through being under capitalised. Not only did farmers have to bear constantly in mind the necessity of having something to sell about rent time, which tended to restrict their operations, but the fact that most of their working capital had to be found in the form of a bank overdraft prevented many farmers from cultivating their land to the best of their ability.

8699. *Variable Results.*—The great variations in the financial results upon farms which are all approximately equally well farmed in their respective styles, are probably accounted for by the great difference there is in the cost of cultivating various classes of soil; by the fortunes of the markets and the seasons in a given year in relation to the style of farming; by the business abilities of the different farmers.

* *See* Appendix No. V

Some farmers make some income from business outside actual farming, such as buying and selling, dealing, and by valuing.

8700. *Economical Size of Holdings.*—It is the opinion of many good farmers, and I strongly share it myself, that farms of 400 acres and over are more economical to work than smaller ones, for the following reasons:—In a small farm, if such an operation as threshing is in progress, it entails a temporary suspension of most of the other operations on the farm while all hands are gathered for the threshing; this means idle horses, whereas on a larger farm employing more hands, threshing and other operations can be carried on simultaneously and the horses are not idle. Another advantage which the larger farm has over the smaller one is that where an operation has been delayed on account of weather, or it is desired to take special advantage of the weather, it is possible on the larger farm to concentrate a larger number of hands on a particular operation.

On the other hand, the largest sizes of farms, say, farms of over about 1,000 acres, should generally be discouraged, because, firstly, on a very large farm there is a tendency to farm sketchily—not sufficiently intensively; and, secondly, there is a huge demand for farms that are capable of being made to pay, and if one man or one company is allowed to concentrate too much land in his or its own hands, it means that one person or company is making a profit where two people should be doing so. At the same time, to discourage farming on a fairly large scale would be imprudent, as it would, in the first place, repress reasonable ambition, and, in the second place, the more well-to-do farmers are the backbone of the agricultural industry, and, on the whole, provide the best conditions for agricultural labourers.

8701. *Systems of Farming.*—The samples given in this report cover three distinct classes of farming. The style of farming in the Border Counties is very similar to the Scottish system; the rotation of crops is the same, with the exception that in the English Counties it is the universal custom to keep a small piece of permanent "cow pasture," whereas, in the North, our grasses are in the arable districts all rotation grasses. In the Border Counties oats are the principal corn crop, as in Scotland.

The style of farming covered by Series I.* is entirely different, and is typical of a great part of England. Referring, as it does, to the Midlands, it is, at the same time, typical of counties where mixed farming is carried on outside the Midland area.

It is not typical of the Eastern Counties of England, where other systems exist.

In South Durham and in Yorkshire a system of farming is carried on which is halfway between the Border county and the Midland systems.

The North Riding is the only portion of Yorkshire from which, within the limited time allotted to the inquiry, it was possible to draw samples. They include farms in the Dales. The wolds unfortunately were not visited.

8702. *Increase in Farming Expenses.*—In considering the present position of the farming industry, it may be borne in mind that, while the prices of farm produce are virtually the same in 1919 as in 1918, many of the costs of production have sensibly increased.

The cost of increased wages is not the only item. Tradesmen's bills, such as blacksmiths', have gone up until they form a considerable item. Replacements of carts and implements are far more costly. Farmwork horses are dearer. In short, everything that is bought to carry on the working of a farm has gone up during the past few months from 15 per cent. to 43 per cent. increase. The 1918–19 profits, which I have not yet seen, must certainly be lower than in previous years.

8703. *Cost of Equipping a Farm.*—Whereas, before the war, £10 per acre was sufficient capital to equip any farm thoroughly, about £17 per acre is now required, and it will, if the present ratio of increase in costs is maintained, soon require considerably more.

8704. *Amount of Labour Employed.*—In the examples which are given, the amount of labour is probably rather understated in counties where casual labour is employed to any considerable extent, because the records of the amount of casual labour employed are generally either not kept with accuracy or are inaccessible.

8705. *The Most Prosperous Farm Workers.*—Probably the most prosperous farm workers in Great Britain are (1) the Cumberland men, who board and lodge with the farmers, and live generally as one of the family. They are splendid workers. A very considerable percentage of the farmers in Cumberland started as farm labourers. (2) In the Eastern Counties of the North of Scotland, where single men's wages range at the present time up to £190 per annum, say, £3 13s. per week, including the value of allowances. (3) In the Fen districts of Lincolnshire and its borders, where the farm workers are also virtually smallholders, though not in the technical sense under the Act; but the farm workers there hardly devote sufficient time to their employers' interest.

8706. *Workers Housing and Gardens.*—The housing of the farm workers, except on certain private estates, is extremely bad all over England, and it is much worse in Scotland. Gardens in England as a source of food supply and pleasure are quite inadequate, and allotments, which are generally sufficient, do not take their place. In Scotland gardens are not encouraged, and the workers do not have time to enjoy them. As a source of food supply they are less necessary than in England to the workers, as in Scotland abundance of vegetables are grown for the worker by the farmer. But as a source of recreation they ought to be encouraged.

8707. *Inadequacy of Farm Steadings.*—In very many parts of the country the farm steadings are inadequate, or ill suited to their purpose. Unless prices of farm produce, and therefore farm profits, are maintained, it will not be possible for farmers to pay the high rate of interest that landlords will be forced to charge upon their outlays in improvements at present-day costs.

[*This concludes the evidence-in-chief.*]†

Chairman: I will ask Mr. Green to begin to put questions.

8708. *Mr. Green*: With regard to the economic size of holdings, do you share Sir Thomas Middleton's opinion, that a number of 100-acre farms should be developed at the expense of 300-acre farms?—I do not quite understand.

8709. *Chairman*: Have you seen Sir Thomas Middleton's evidence?—No, I have not.

8710. *Mr. Green*: I think you referred in your evidence to your idea of a farm about 400 acres. It bears upon that point?—If I may correct you, I have said it is more economical for a farm to be 400 acres or over than under 400 acres.

8711. I merely asked your opinion whether you think it would be more economical, and better for the nation, to have more 100-acre farms at the expense of the 300-acre farms by reducing the 300-acre farms?—I do not know how to answer that question. I do not think I could possibly answer it off-hand. It is not a question to which I have had my attention directed.

8711A. Is it your opinion that the worst cultivated farms are those of about 150 acres?—No, I do not think so. My experience was that the worst cultivated farms are those which are much smaller than that—under 100 acres.

8712. You consider the Cumberland men, who are boarded and lodged by the farmers, are probably the most prosperous labourers in Great Britain?—Yes.

8713. Some people have imagined from this, and the high wages they get in comparison with the southern counties, that the Cumberland farm workers do not desire smallholdings. I take it that is not true, as I notice in Mr. Maurice Hewlett's figures§ there are 3831 holdings under 50 acres in Cumberland, and only

* *See* Tables in Appendix No. V.

† In addition to the above, Mr. Wallace submitted the Notes, Reports and Statistics which are contained or referred to in Appendix No. V.

§ *See* page 53. "Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture," Vol. II., Reports of Investigators (Cmd. 25).

150 above 300 acres. That points to the fact, does it not, that Cumberland is practically a county of smallholdings?—I do not think it is a county of smallholdings under the Act, but it is a county of small "takes"; and in a report which I sent in to the Board of Agriculture I hazarded a guess—it was only a guess, but made very carefully—that probably about 30 per cent. of the farms in Cumberland are now held by occupiers who started life as farm workers. When I say the farm worker is so prosperous in Cumberland, I wish to lay special emphasis on the fact that he lives for the most part in the farmer's house, and lives very well, and he only has to spend his wages upon cigarettes and boots. He lives very well indeed.

8714. Mr. Hewlett brings out the fact that the average size of the farms in Cumberland is from 5 to 50 acres, whereas those in Northamptonshire are from 50 to 300 acres, according to your investigations?—Yes.

8715. But Northamptonshire is the worst farmed county of the two, do you say?—Yes, I should say it is. The northern county is superior. Cumberland is a county of small farms.

8716. Mr. Hewlett says that the position of the boarded man is exactly that of a domestic servant. I suppose from that we are to gather he is glad to escape from that position to that of a master man on a smallholding. Do you agree with Mr. Hewlett's opinion on that?—No, I do not at all; because what I observed was that the farm servant was more like a member of the family than a domestic servant. He seems to be on the most friendly and intimate terms with the family, with whom for the most part he lodges. I do not agree with a good many of Mr. Maurice Hewlett's remarks in regard to the northern counties.

8717. With regard to your note about allotments, do you not consider the cottage garden far more useful to the labourer than the allotment?—Very much so. I strongly agree with that.

8718. As we have had witnesses to inform us here that sheep do not pay, that bullocks do not pay, that milk does not pay, that wheat does not pay, and potatoes do not pay, can you tell us how farmers manage to make both ends meet, and pay their income tax?—I am not prepared to say that those things do not pay under certain conditions. They may not pay under certain other conditions; but that is not my statement.

8719. Do I understand that you do not believe it possible for us to arrive at any decision for the purpose of fixing guaranteed prices?—I think it is possible to arrive at a decision, and I think it is necessary to arrive at a decision; but I think it can only be done by calling for a large number of returns from different parts of the country in regard to the costs of production. I would then wish to emphasise very strongly that after examining those costs of production, and satisfying yourselves as to the basis upon which they are made, you must then allow a large margin, because as I endeavoured to bring out in one of my remarks, it is not sufficient merely to say that the cost of growing an acre of wheat is so much and the cost of producing a pound of wool is so much, and then allocate a sufficient price to each of those articles to cover the cost of production plus a profit, because farming is very much in the lap of the Gods. It is very speculative; and, as I endeavoured to show was the case last year, things do not turn out at all as they are very often expected to do. A farmer will very often lose upon one crop, and if he has only been allowed a bare margin of profit upon the other crop, he will fail. What a farmer loses on the swings he looks to gain on the round-abouts; and therefore, if you do not want to kill farming, you must allow a liberal margin of profit upon each of the articles he produces.

8720. In your investigation of cottage property have you come to the conclusion that many young men who want to get married are obliged to leave their occupation on the land because of the lack of cottage accommodation?—Yes; emphatically yes.

8721. You agree that labour is not likely to be attracted to farm work, if the labourer and his wife and seven children say have to live in a small three roomed cottage as you describe?—The greatest want of agriculture in my opinion now is better housing. As I have publicly stated, no amount of wages will satisfy a man who is not decently housed.

8722. Do you agree with me that new cottages should form part of the village street close to the school rather than be on isolated parts?—That really depends very much on what part of the country you are referring to. In the Midlands, no doubt, the farm worker objects very strongly to living outside a village. In fact, I came across a good many cases where cottages on the farm were empty because, although the farmer was very short of labour and offering almost any inducement to get people to live in them, they would not live away from the villages. But in the North that is not so much the case.

8723. Not only the labourer, but particularly the labourer's wife, I take it, objects most strongly?—But in northern counties you do not find to the same extent that general desire to live in a village.

8724. I gather, from evidence given at a previous Commission, that farm tied cottages were not prevalent before the "Seventies"?—I cannot tell you: I have not the information on that point.

8725. What do you consider to be the economic size of a small mixed holding of medium land for the working of a pair of horses?—I am afraid I could not answer that question off-hand. It has been considered by county council authorities that a living for a family can be made off a holding of 30 acres and upwards.

8726. I wanted your experience and knowledge, and not that of the county councils?—I could not answer the question in that form.

8727. You say that a number of farmers are content with a thresh-out of three quarters an acre, who could, if they liked, get six quarters. Do you mean by that that the farmers do not do their best by the land?—They have not had sufficient agricultural training to do their best in many cases. It is astonishing the extent to which the English farmer is quite ignorant of the action of chemical manuring, for instance, as compared to the man in the North.

8728. You really stick to that statement?—Certainly.

8729. Do you really think the farmers in Northamptonshire ask themselves that question with all the reasoning involved which you set forth about the attitude of the farmer?—That is the general feeling of doubt and misgiving all over the whole of the country. No farmer I ever met had the least objection to paying very high wages. His only difficulty has been his doubt as to how long he would be able to continue to pay them. It is only fair to farmers that that should be known.

8730. What did you mean by hoping that the leaders of modern Trade Unions would not follow the violent methods of Joseph Arch?—Joseph Arch lived a long time before my day; but from what I could gather, even making allowance for the very conservative days in which he lived, and times are very changed now, I think he preached a rather violent doctrine from what I hear from those people who can remember his speeches.

8731. I think he would be quite a moderate man nowadays?—I think he may perhaps from what I can gather; but he rather rushed into a strike, for instance, by what I call rather a violent method. It may have been necessary in those days, with a very conservative people to deal with.

8732. You only go by hearsay?—I only go from what I have heard from people who have heard his speeches.

8733. Farmers have told you that, I suppose?—Farmers, and farm workers too.

8734. So that when you say in your pamphlet that you rather regret that labourers should have railwaymen to represent them as secretaries of Trade Unions, have you ever thought there was a reason behind that?—Yes; the reason behind it is that the agricultural worker is rather a retiring sort of man. He has not been used to organisations, and he has not been used to Unions, and he feels incapable of organising himself; he therefore naturally turns to another class of worker who has been accustomed to organising, in order to get help in forming his body. But I think it is a very bad thing indeed for

agriculture, especially from the point of view of the agricultural labourer, that they do have to take the lead from people who know absolutely nothing about agricultural conditions. It has a very unfortunate effect. In many cases it leads to demands which are perfectly impossible, and leads to a certain amount of feeling which ought not to exist; because there ought to be no feeling against Unions; only when impossible attitudes are taken up, it does lead to a certain amount of feeling, and it only arises from the total inability of a man like a railwayman to understand the conditions under which agriculture is necessarily carried on.

8735. Have you also thought this out, that many of these railwaymen have been working on the farm themselves and have been the sons of labourers, and left the farm because they could get higher wages elsewhere? They are quite accustomed to farm life themselves, and the men themselves make them secretaries. That is one reason. Another, I suggest to you, is that in the past, unfortunately, many of the labourer secretaries have been boycotted and sacked by farmers for taking any official position in the Union?—Yes, I am afraid that is the case. I have not met or heard of leaders who are not farm workers who have been in any way accustomed to farm life. I have met some of these leaders who live in villages. I have one great leader in mind now, who is a retired schoolmaster, who certainly does not know much about agriculture, and I think another is a stone-mason. He does not know much about agriculture except from living in country villages, and in his very early youth when I think he lived with his father who was employed in agriculture. That is the kind of thing.

8736. Did you find it universally carried out in the Midland Counties, which you investigated, that perquisites of board and lodging were not counted as part of the cash wages?—They were hardly ever counted as part of the wages. They were almost invariably given in.

8737. And you think that still holds good?—Yes, it did up to last year, and I have no doubt it does now.

8738. Therefore, the men are getting more than their minimum wage?—Yes. I have stated that in my notes, I think you will see.

8739. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: Referring to farm workers, you say that in the Eastern Counties of the North of Scotland a single man's wages range at the present time up to £190 per annum, including the value of allowances. How much of that do you reckon as allowances?—I was taking out from my own farms in Aberdeenshire the wages and the allowances, and I have not any men paid as high as £190. I took that from a statement which I saw published. The top wage in Aberdeenshire is about £150, the allowances coming to about £50 in the case of the married man; and I put the cost of keeping single men at about the same amount.

8740. That would leave £140 for cash wages?—Which is higher than I have personally known paid. As I say, I took that from a statement which was published.

8741. I think that must be very much exaggerated, because I know the rate for a first horseman would not be anything like £140 a year; it would be more like £80 a year.

Mr. Duncan: It is quite correct. It amounts to that, and more in some cases.

8742. *Mr. Batchelor*: It goes up to £160?—It does not apply in Aberdeenshire, but I think it does in some other parts. I should say in Aberdeenshire it it is £150.

8743. *Mr. J. M. Henderson*: You say that in Scotland, gardens are not encouraged, and the workers do not have time to enjoy them?—That is the case.

8744. You are in favour of some gardens for the workers, are not you?—I am very strongly in favour of it.

8745. To grow both flowers and fruit?—Yes.

8746. Would you say that the culture of fruit in farms where they have ample room, and very little labour is required on fruit trees, might not be a great deal more encouraged for household purposes and so forth?—The only cases which I have come across in the County I know best, which is Aberdeenshire, is where they have tried to grow fruit other than bush fruit, it has generally been a failure. Bush fruit might be grown a great deal more than it is.

8747. And apples, surely?—Apples have very often been a failure.

8748. Then you speak very gloomily of milk. Have you, in your many wanderings, ever seen the depot at Simley, near Shaftesbury?—No, I have not seen that.

8749. There are, of course, depots where the farmers deliver milk and are paid on the spot so much a gallon, and are finished with it?—Quite. My point is, why should they have finished with it? Why should they not share in the further profits by being shareholders in the milk factory.

8750. I was coming to that; but I was rather on this point: that you say in your book, on page 11: "The steadings are generally from the point of view of cleanly and economical milk production, of the very dirtiest and most ill-designed types"?—That applies to England: it applies less to Scotland.

8751. My object was to show that there are depots where the milk is properly cleaned and the conditions are good?—I mean, the farm steadings are so dirty and ill-arranged for milk production. They have mostly been built for feeding, and the cost of adapting them to milk production now is practically prohibitive.

8752. In some of your schedules I find it rather difficult to follow you: in fact, it would take a good deal of understanding. In series II.,* Cumberland and Westmorland, there is a statement showing the difference in profits on two scales of wages. There is a dairy mixed, the fourth example down: You say "wages £180" and "cash profit" "lived, no cash." This man with his 300 acres of dairy and mixed, made no profit but managed to live. Is that the meaning of that column?—Yes.

8753. Then in 1918 he made £5 profit per acre?—Yes.

8754. What I cannot understand is this. You say that the profit on the capital is 28 per cent., and then in the next column you say the profit in 1914 at the present rate of wages would be £100 lower about?—Yes.

8755. You say he lived with no cash; and you have taken it if he were paying the same rate of wages as now, he would have lost £100?—That is what I mean.

8756. But now, on account of high wages?—Last year, not this year.

8757. Last year he made £1,500?—Yes. A detailed statement in regard to that is among the examples which I told the Chairman are in the secretaries' office.

8758. The very next item is 350 acres mixed. The wages are £213 16s. 0d. in 1914?—Yes.

8759. You say their cash profit is £86?—Yes.

8760. But the balance sheet profit is £222?—Because that includes appreciation. It is the difference between the increase in capital value and merely a cash profit. I have taken out the cash profit.

8761. But the balance sheet shows a profit of £222?—Yes which balance sheet is in the bundle.

8762. Then the next one is 200 acres. The loss in 1914 was £455 14s., and as to the profit in 1918 you mark here a loss, but the balance sheet shows £878 13s.†?—Yes. There again he did not make any actual cash profit, but he got an appreciation in his capital.

8763. That is not exactly what this means. You say he is at a loss. Does the balance sheet show £878 13s.† loss?—Yes.

8764. Then that is a balance sheet loss as well?—That again you will find in the detailed statements on which this is based. It is the difference between merely taking the cash profit, as I do, and the real profit which a chartered accountant would take according to a balance sheet.

8765. An ordinary balance sheet debits the valuation at one time and credits it at another?—Yes.

8766. The next one I wish to call attention to is 101 acres mixed. The wages paid there are only £17, and in 1914 he lived but had no cash profit?—Yes.

8767. In 1918 he had £40 cash profit?—Yes, that is so.

* *See* Table No. 3 in Appendix No. V.

† This figure was subsequently altered to £378 13s.

8768. You were good enough to say that you had some actual balance sheets of farmers?—Yes.

8769. Actual balance sheets of real farms?—Yes; made out by chartered accountants over a series of years, in some cases dealing with five consecutive years farming.

8770. Are these the farmer's own balance sheets?—No, they are made out by a chartered accountant.

8771. From their own figures?—Yes. The firm of accountants keep the books for the farmer.

8772. These would be for farms of 100 to 300 acres, such as I have quoted to you now?—I cannot tell you which; but some of these figures are actually taken from those balance sheets.

8773. We have had one balance sheet, but that was of a very large estate. We have had no balance sheet of small farms of 100 to 300 acres, and so on?—There are several balance sheets of these individual farms I have mentioned which are ordinary medium-sized farms.

8774. There is another one in the next table which I should like to ask you about. It is dairy mixed, the fifth down. There again the balance sheet shows £1,485 9s. profit, with a cash profit of £1,262 in 1914? You will find the actual statements in the bundle I have referred to.

8775. Then I will not trouble with any more, except No. 8. I think there is a clerical error there. I think the £125 3s. ought to be £1,253?—No, that is right. I thought so too when I was reading over the figures, but you will see the reason in my statement. The actual statement of account is in the bundle. There was a special explanation of it.

8776. What is your own private estimate, as a practical farmer, of what the guarantee should be, if there is to be one at all?—Do you mean the price?

8777. You know the Corn Production Act guarantees 55s. for the wheat of this crop?—Yes. You mean, what is my idea of what price should be guaranteed.

8778. That is it?—I am not prepared to give an answer, because, although I got out some figures for it last year, costs have changed very much; and the only way you can arrive at any proper data for that, is by asking a large number of people in different parts of the country and averaging it out. There is nothing more bewildering, I have found, than getting out estimates of costs from different parts of the country which vary by several pounds an acre. There is a reason for it too; that is, the variable costs in production according to the situation of the land.

8779. Have you formed any idea of the length of years which this guarantee should cover?—No, I have not.

8780. Or have you formed any idea as to what are the prospects after the guarantee is finished?—Yes, I have tried to describe that in my address to the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce. It is perfectly impossible, in my opinion, for farming to pay the present costs if the price of produce goes down. The prices of cake, implements and so on, may go down; but in my own mind I think it is improbable that wages will go down. I shall be very sorry to see them go down, and so every farmer will be. All the farmers ask is, that they shall be kept in the position to pay them; but they certainly will not be in a position to pay them, or at least such is my opinion, if prices are left merely to be regulated by supply and demand. I try to bring that point out in my address. It is only a matter of price for wheat to come out. I cannot say next year or the year after what the price will be, it is pure guess work.

8781. Supposing after this guarantee is over, the price of Colonial wheat dropped down in the market price to 50s., and the price of all feeding stuffs and implements dropped similarly, leaving the wages alone, are you still of opinion that then it becomes an impossibility to grow wheat at a profit?—I do not think it will be possible, but I do not think it is possible to legislate far ahead. Nobody knows what changes are in store; and I do not see that anybody could possibly fix a minimum price for more than a short period ahead, and renew it from time to time. It is a perfect kaleidoscope. There is nothing more bewildering than going into these accounts, as I did, as the position is changing the whole time.

8782. *Mr. Thomas Henderson*: Could you tell us exactly what it meant by that last column in your schedule,* the profit in 1914 at present rate of wages, that is, the 1918 scale of wages. How do you calculate that?—This I did for another Committee last year. That is to say, if wages which were paid last year had been paid in 1914, that is what the profit would have been.

8783. Did you take the 1918 prices?—No. All I did was to take the farming accounts for 1914, and I simply imagined that those individuals of whom I had a note, and in each case I had taken a note, had been paid at the rate of the 1918 wages. Then the 1914 profit would have been reduced so much.

8784. You merely substituted 1918?—I merely substituted that wage for the same individuals for 1914.

8785. Without taking into account any diminution?—Without taking that into account.

8786. Without considering whether the same number of labourers were employed or not?—No; I took the actual individuals in each case.

8787. With regard to your sliding scale, what food stuff do you propose this 40 per cent. of yours should apply to, which is to slide up and down according to prices?—I meant all food stuffs which are produced on the farm; for instance, oats, wheat, milk, meat, and potatoes. That is what I meant.

8788. But you see in the excerpt from your report on "Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture" you say: "If the cost of food—such as milk, flour, sugar—rose the wages would have to rise similarly proportionately"?—Of course that was a slip, I could not alter it after I had written it in my report; but sugar is an imported article.

8789. That is one difficulty I had?—This is an excerpt from my report; and it occurred to me afterwards it ought not to be included. Of course, it is not home produce.

8790. You would fluctuate this 40 per cent. with the price of home grown produce?—That was my idea.

8791. But you will agree that meat and bread, to some extent, are also imported?—Yes.

8792. Are you going to make an allowance for the imported quantities?—No; because you will have to make it fluctuate according to the price of that article, whether it is imported or not. I mean to say, the farmer's price is regulated by the importations.

8793. So that you are going to take the whole amount of food consumed by the farm labourers, I suppose, and make that 40 per cent. apply to that?—Yes.

8794. What quantities of each are you going to take? How are you going to fix the quantities of these food stuffs that are going to enter into the composition of this sliding scale?—The Board have had a large number of labourers' budgets all over the country, which, I think, have been published in Blue Book form, which, I think, give you a very good idea of each article consumed in England. It was the subject of a great investigation.

8795. Have you any knowledge of the working of the sliding scales in other industries?—No, I have not.

8796. You do not know, for example, how they work in the coal trade?—No, I do not.

8797. Would not it be well to consider how it worked there before you apply it to another industry?—It may not be at all on all fours.

8798. You know in the coal trade wages are supposed to fluctuate on the selling price of coal?—Yes; but I have not said wages should. I said a proportion of them. It makes the whole difference.

8799. Yes, a little?—It is the whole difference. I do not say the whole wage should fluctuate, by no means. I said a proportion of the wage that proportion which applies to the purchase of the stuff which is produced upon the farm—the foodstuffs.

8800. That is, of course, the only part they could apply to?—Yes; but that is the difference between this and an industry like the coal industry, because there you are talking about the whole wage fluctuating. I did not propose that.

8801. I quite agree; but the point is that you make the principle apply in the farming industry just as far as it can apply, as in the coal trade; that is to say, the selling price of the commodity has a good deal to do with this proposal, and the wages?—Yes.

* *See* Tables in Appendix No. V.

8802. Would you be surprised to hear there have been complaints against the working of the principle elsewhere; that the wages do not follow prices so closely and so accurately as I think you want them to do? Are you aware of that?—Yes, quite.

8803. How do you get over the difficulty in farming?—I suggested one method. You will have to find a basis for it. I propose, for instance, in England, the tithe rent charge as the basis.

8804. What would you do for Scotland?—I do not know, I cannot answer off-hand. We will have to find something for there—the Fiars' Court Prices Rate, or something of that sort. We have the Fiars' Court there. We would have to think out an equivalent.

8805. You are going to make the part of the wages devoted to the purchase of necessaries fluctuate?—Yes.

8806. And co-relatively you are going to make that part spent on more or less conventional luxuries remain constant?—Yes.

8807. It is rather a new principle. You have not the scheme in detail, have you?—No, I have not.

8808. You have only thrown out the idea?—That is all, which I have long cherished.

8809. Turning now to your speech at Aberdeen, you say on page 1 that the farm servant has been assured of a minimum wage, "and that only until 1922." That was in Aberdeen. I am not referring to your opinion regarding England, but surely the farm worker in Aberdeen, as in other parts of Scotland, has had no benefit at all from the minimum wages being assured to 1922?—Why not.

8810. Obviously, because they are much above it, and always have been?—Quite so; but it is the minimum wage, not the maximum.

8811. Let me make my point quite clear. If you turn to your excerpt here with regard to the conditions of employment in agriculture in Northamptonshire, you say something there about the danger that lies in fixing wages by Act of Parliament at a comparatively high level; that is to say, in Northamptonshire apparently the minimum wage fixed by the Corn Production Act is the wage in operation?—Yes.

8812. In Scotland it is entirely different?—Yes; we have always paid a much higher wage in Scotland, and in the North of England too.

8813. I quite agree; but the point I wish to make is, that the Scottish worker is assured of a minimum wage long past 1922, so long as he can fulfil the conditions of the assurance he has at present?—What guarantee has he that wages will not go down except that he will not work for less?

8814. Precisely. In other words, a Scottish farm servant, I may point out to you, has always had higher wages. For what reason? Why have the minimum charges under the Corn Production Act never applied to Scotland?—Because they have always paid more than that. They have always paid more in the North than in the South, and they have done far more work for their money.

8815. But why?—An hour a day means virtually a day a week: they have worked for longer hours. They are more efficient workmen and more skilled workmen. They can afford to pay more to them.

8816. You have not answered my question. The mere fact that a farmer is able to pay more, as you know perfectly well, does not mean that he is going to pay more unless he is made to do it?—I do not think that at all; because I have found a great many cases in England as well as in Scotland where the farmer has paid more than the minimum wage and has not been made to do so at all.

8817. Why is it that these minimum wages have not been operative in Scotland, and the wages paid have always been higher?—I cannot tell you offhand.

8818. My point is that this reference on page 1 of your pamphlet that the worker is only assured of his minimum wage till 1922, might apply to England but does not apply to Scotland?—I do not know why it does not apply to Scotland. Supposing the farmer refuses to pay more than a certain wage?

8819. He would not get the men to work for him then. Then on page 2 you say: "The best young men would do anything rather than become or remain agricultural labourers." Have you noticed any tendency amongst them to come back with the higher wages that are being paid now?—Not much.

8820. Also on page 2, in the next paragraph, you say: "Even in 1913 and 1914 good farmers for the most part found that when they had paid their expenses and had lived very moderately themselves, there was little or no cash profit left over to put by or to add to their capital." We have had here on pretty good authority, and I think you would recognise the good authority, that before the war the average profit of farmers was from 10 to 20 per cent. You would not agree with that estimate?—I have given you a very large number of cases showing the actual profits made. Those cases which I have selected are representative farmers, and representative of the class of farming they go in for; but they are distinctly above the average as experts, and in the amount of money which they put into the land. I mean to say, their farming is of a higher order than the average; but I have given you a large number of what I claim as facts in this statement showing individually what the actual profits made in 1914 were.

8821. The quotation I gave you just now was from Sir Daniel Hall's book on Agriculture during the War?—The profits made after the war were extremely variable; in fact bewilderingly variable.

8822. He was not prophesying; he was stating the definite fact before the war that the profit was 20 per cent.?—You will see yourself what I have stated in the number of forms which are on the Chairman's table. In fact I have shown in a lot of them in these statements what the profits were.

8823. On page 5, you say farmers are under considerable temptation to realise now and go out of farming?—Yes.

8824. Have you seen any great tendency among farmers lately to leave the industry?—Among the older men, yes.

8825. That would be natural in any case?—A fairly large number of men who would not I think under other conditions, that is to say, pre-war conditions, have retired, and would probably have carried on, have taken the opportunity of retiring while they had their capital intact, because they did not know what the prices in future were going to be.

8826. And their places have been taken by other people who are coming into the industry?—Yes. I would not say there are any fewer farmers. There is a great demand for farms.

8827. As a matter of fact, you know a great many that are buying their own farms, do not you?—Yes.

8828. That would indicate that the temptation to leave is not considerable, would it not?—I think it is considerable to many men who have made a bit of money and are getting on in life.

8829. Put it in the other way then?—Of course with a young man it is another matter.

8830. We will put it that there is a considerable temptation to another man to come in?—I do not think there is, because it is a very dear matter now to get into a farm. Equipping a farm is an extremely expensive thing.

8831. But the fact remains that they are doing that?—They are.

8832. When you talk about the fear of the farmer's position when he has to face falling prices, are you contemplating falling prices which are simply going to affect the farmer's commodities which he produces for sale, or a fall in general prices?—Of course he will benefit to some extent by a fall in general prices, but not enough to make up for the loss he will incur through the fall in the price of the articles he sells himself. Of course, as a member of the community he will benefit to the extent that he can buy his necessities cheaper.

8833. You have not worked that out?—I cannot work it out mathematically, but I have a very clear view. If I may interrupt a moment, I did try very hard to collect some figures to show what the detailed expenditure upon a large number of farms was upon such things as implements, horse-shoeing, and so on, but I could not arrive at any reliable figures. That bears upon your question. I cannot tell you what proportion of gain there would be to loss.

8834. In your pamphlet, you quote Mr. Runciman's estimate of wheat prices, and you seem to approve of his prophesy that wheat prices would fall to about

28s. below the present fixed prices if left to themselves. Do you still hold to that?—I have not a view; it is pure guesswork.

8835. You were simply taking this as a sort of rough basis for talking to these people?—Yes, that was so.

8836. One other point on your Interim Report, in your paragraph headed "The Burden of Overtime Pay in Rainy Districts." You refer to the burden of overtime in rainy districts. I should like you to explain a point there. Is not it the case that overtime rates are paid only after the minimum weekly hours have been worked?—Yes.

8837. So that this picturesque little sketch——?—The point is this. I will give you an example of it. Supposing you have a man whom you cannot employ all day owing to weather conditions; that is to say, you have to pay him whether he is working or not. It is a wet day, and there is very little work to do on a wet day. I do not say that there is no work, but often very little to do. I had Cumberland in my mind, where it happens constantly; you get rain throughout the day and you cannot gather the hay in and cannot drive in your corn. Then you get a beautiful evening, bright and sunny and breezy, and you turn out and load your corn or hay, whichever the case may be, and you have to pay overtime. It is a very serious burden. It is very difficult in a climate like that, whereas in the South or the Midlands of England you can generally count on a fine day in the summer. You see my point. With a very changeable climate like that, it is a very grave burden.

8838. I quite agree; but what is the custom in Cumberland? They work the customary hours, do they not?—Yes.

8839. How does overtime come in?—They have to work overtime just the same. I cannot remember at the moment, without referring to the book, what the hours in Cumberland are.

8840. They are the customary hours?—But, then, if they work overtime, they have to pay for it.

8841. But the point is, they have actually worked a full day?—No. My point is they have actually not worked the full day in that climate. I saw it myself when staying there. Owing to these showery conditions, they sometimes do not do much work in the day, and they cannot get in their hay till the evening, when they have to pay overtime rates. It is a great burden. It is the same thing in the whole country to a modified degree. Now you have this change of daylight, you cannot get into the hay in the early morning because it is dewey, and the overtime begins early in the evening.

8842. I will leave the matter of overtime and hours to some of my English colleagues; but you are proposing in effect that all the burden of the eccentricities of the climate is going to be flung on the farm servant. According to your own showing, the farmer bears the little vagaries of fortune?—I am merely trying to point out that it is very difficult to legislate equitably for the whole of the country at once, and there ought to be varying conditions in varying climates. I say it is not fair to apply the same conditions to a county like Cumberland, of which we have spoken, as would apply to a county like Northamptonshire, say.

8843. Yet you admit yourself that the Cumberland farm is much better and much more profitable than the Northamptonshire farm?—It is better farming. I have not said it is more profitable.

8844. There is one point Mr. Green asked you about. You said there was no general desire for village life in the Northern Counties on the part of the workers?—That I found to be the case.

8845. You are referring to England, of course?—The Border Counties.

8846. And Scotland, too?—Yes; I should say Scotland, too. I do not think they like village life so much either there.

8847. You are aware that a great many of the Scottish farm workers object very much to the isolated tied house?—No; I have not come across it in my part.

8848. *Mr. Prosser Jones*: Do you farm yourself?—Yes.

8849. Would you agree with me that the wages paid to the farm workers are considerably below those paid in other industries?—Yes; I should say, on the whole, they are.

8850. Do you agree with me that the hours worked by these men are considerably longer than the hours worked in other industries?—That varies so much. It varies very much in different parts of the country. It depends how many hours you take out for meals and rest; and also the actual time of beginning and ending varies very much.

8851. I am taking the total hours for the week. Are not they longer than in any other industry practically?—I could not answer the question off-hand.

8852. Is it your experience that there is a shortage of farm workers at the present time?—Do you mean all over?

8853. Right throughout the country?—Yes, on the whole in England. To some extent there is a shortage, too, in Scotland, I should say. On the whole, I would say there is a shortage.

8854. Do you agree with me that there is a large number of men unemployed at the present time?—I do not know; but I will accept your statement if you say there are. I have not found a great many myself.

8855. What is likely to attract more men to the land—higher wages and shorter hours, or what?—Better housing, for one thing; that is the chief thing.

8856. Single men do not want houses of their own?—I mentioned that in one of my reports. I think there is a great deal to be done in the education of boys. I think there is nothing to attract a boy in going on to a farm, in England especially. If you take Northumberland, he is reared up in his family where every member of the family works on the farm. The girls work till they get married, and so on. But if you take anywhere in the Midlands or the South of England, what happens to the boy when he goes on the farm? He is probably put with the horseman, and probably does not care twopence about horses. He has the earliest and latest hours worked on the farm with the horseman. He generally cheeks the carter, or something or other happens, and he gets into trouble with him. There are no steps ever taken to give him a liking for farm life. For instance, if only in their school days they could manage to train them, and give them a liking for farming by giving them classes upon a neighbouring farm, or having a County Council farm teaching them the skilled operations like thatching, hedging, and ditching. You will find in my reports of different meetings, I asked boys why they had never learned to be skilled men; and they said they never got the chance of learning, that the old hands did not take the trouble to teach them. I think a great deal can be done by educating boys to give them a liking for farm life. Take one village. A boy takes it into his head to go as a policeman, and another boy goes as a policeman; then the whole lot of boys go. In the next village you find they go to the railway; and so they follow each other like a flock of sheep. If only you could get them interested in the farm work and get them to learn the more skilled work of the farm earlier in their life, I think it would go a long way to help to attract them. I gave an illustration in one of my reports, I think in the Buckinghamshire report* of an experiment which a very enlightened farmer there made in the way of educating boys, and the good results which came from it. I venture to draw your attention to it. It is a very interesting illustration of my meaning.

8857. This matter of education is going to be tackled by the various education authorities throughout the country?—I am very glad to hear it.

8858. Taking the important commodities produced from the farm, say, as compared with coal and machinery, do not you think that the rate of wages are too low to attract these men to come to this industry, and that they ought to be brought up to the level of other industries?—I think that if you give a man a good home and a good garden, he will be content to work in the country for considerably less wages than he will be in a town.

8859. But you want to attract the younger men on to the farms, do not you?—I think that will go a long way towards it. I place the greatest emphasis possible upon a good house and a good garden. It will form one of the greatest possible attractions to

* *See* page 12. "Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture," Vol. II., Reports of Investigators [Cmd. 25].

men who now drift into the towns, to remain in the country, and to come back into the country.

8860. I think you say here that the economic size of a farm would be 400 acres up to 1,000?—No. What I meant to say was, that a farm is of more economic size to work if it is 400 acres upwards than if it is below 400 acres.

8861. Does not that mean that you would have less men on the land than if you had, say, a farm of 400 acres?—There is only one family there. Would not it be better if you had four families controlling 100 acres each?—I do not think the size of the farm has really anything to do with the number of men employed per 100 acres.

8862. But would not it give a monopoly to one person? He would draw the benefits out of 400 acres, instead of four families doing so?—You mean to say, am I in favour of splitting up a 400-acre farm and dividing it into four 100-acre farms? I would have a large number of small farms; but I am not prepared to say that I would break up every 400-acre farm into 100-acre farms. I think that would be a great mistake; because, as I think I have said somewhere, the rather larger farmers are the backbone of the industry. I think they provide the most and best employment in most cases—not all. Cumberland is a county of small farms; and there they provide very good conditions for the men. But taking the country all over, I think it is the biggest farmers who very often provide the best conditions; and I think with every industry, if you are going to take the biggest and the strongest men with the most capital out of it you will ruin it. You want to have all sizes. I am all in favour of providing a large number of moderate holdings like 100 acres, but do not for goodness sake take your strongest and best men out of an industry, as you will be taking the backbone out of it.

8866. You say in your evidence-in-chief, §8705, that the workers of Cumberland are very excellent and splendid workers. Are they better than in other countries?—I think they are as good as any I have seen anywhere. I attribute it largely to the fact that they are very well fed and well kept.

8864. Do you attribute their efficiency to the fact that they are well looked after?—I attribute a good deal of it to that. Then they are very interested in their work. They live with the family, and they take as much interest in the work as the farmer does himself. The main point is, I think, that they live so very well.

8865. Do you find much complaint against the agricultural worker as to efficiency—that he is indifferent to his work and so on, since the war in particular?—No. I have had more complaint since the war of the inefficiency of labour supplied, which has been soldier labour. They have been very willing fellows; but they have not known much about it, and have not found it easy to learn their job. That is what I have had the most general complaint of.

8866. *Mr. Nicholls*: I only want to ask you on the point of education of boys, whether you have found in any case where a boy really tried to make himself specially efficient, the farmer has encouraged that boy by any extra that he might give him?—Yes; I have found cases where the farmer did, but the boys generally complain that the men themselves do not encourage them.

8867. Supposing we go on with the education of the boys, do you think it would be a good plan to give the lads certificates or diplomas on the understanding that as soon as a boy did get a certificate or diploma of efficiency, that would mean extra payment over his ordinary wages?—I think it is a splendid idea, and I am sure every farmer would jump at it.

8868. Would you be surprised if I told you that for a very long time I have been advocating it among farmers, and they are a little bit shy of it. I mean it is a very strong thing with me; and I have always felt that young fellows who took an interest in their job and really cared to become efficient, were not encouraged as they ought to have been by the men who employed them. The excuse was: "Well, if I give him something extra, it will unsettle him and make the others dissatisfied"?—I do not think that is a sound argument. I am very strongly in favour of your idea. I think it is a splendid idea.

8869. I have always felt that just as you give a lad or a girl something to show that he or she has passed a certain examination, say, for ambulance work or some other thing that proves efficiency, they are proud of that; and a farmer ought to be proud that he has got a young fellow who is keen on that line, and that he should encourage him?—I quite agree with you. I always make a point of giving a good man a bit extra.

8870. *Mr. Smith*: Do you believe in the workmen being organised?—Certainly I do. I have stated so in public. It is a necessity.

8871. I see you suggest a system of sliding scales as a method of paying wages?—Yes.

8872. Have you really thought that out in connection with agriculture?—Will you put a point upon your question?

8873. Have you thought it out from the point of view of the difficulty that would exist in applying it? Would not it mean uncertainty existing all the time as far as the labourer was concerned, as to what his position was?—Not if my scheme worked as I think it would work, because the labourer's well-being would be unaffected thereby.

8874. You are speaking now from the theory of it. I am speaking from the point of view of its application. Do not you think that one of the things that is essential from the point of view of the labourer is, that he should know what his wages are to be and have some assurance each week?—You see the whole point is, that with the money fixed which he spends on every purpose except these particular articles I have enumerated, if he is able to buy these particular foodstuffs for less money, he does not need so much money, and therefore his position is absolutely unaffected. The money which he has for spending on luxuries or other necessities is stable.

8875. It means, if your suggestion were carried out, that part of his income would be speculative, and depend upon the prices of certain commodities?—It would depend upon the prices of certain commodities. He would always have enough money to buy these commodities.

8876. But the point comes as to how you are going to determine the varying point of his wages. I want to suggest to you that the machinery that would have to be established would be so cumbersome, and the difficulty of coming to an agreement would be so great, that there would be continual irritation in the industry, which in itself would be bad?—I do not think that would be so, if we could find some automatic basis. For instance, I suggested a sliding scale in England would be the recognised basis. Then there ought not to be any misunderstanding. It is a means of enabling the farmer to pay the high wages which no farmer wants to reduce; and the status of the position and the comfort of the workman remain the same.

8877. Do you know that this has been tried in certain industries, and it is gradually going out because of the difficulty of it?—I know a sliding scale for wages has; but I did not know that a sliding scale for this particular purpose had been applied.

8878. Do not you know that it is difficult to apply it in industries where the labour is concentrated, and where the article is produced day by day? If it is difficult there, it would be much more difficult in an industry like agriculture?—No, I do not think so, because you are talking of quite another matter altogether. You are comparing the fluctuations of wages with the cost of producing coal and iron, for instance, whereas I am merely talking about a portion of the wages fluctuating with the cost of producing food; that is to say, that portion of the wages which is applied to the purchase of the particular article of food.

8879. It is part of the wages?—Yes; but it always provides enough wage to buy the article for which it is intended—the food.

8880. *Dr. Douglas*: On that point would not it be a great difficulty in applying a price scale to wages, that the available scale would always be that of the preceding year? Your cereal price scale would always be that of the preceding season, would it not?—Why would it?

8881. Your year's prices do not become applicable until after harvest, do they?—That is true. I had not thought of that point.

8882. It is an important practical point, is not it?—Yes, it is. I am not prepared to say how we can get over that difficulty in Scotland.

8883. Does not the same difficulty arise in England. In any period at any month, the existing tithe rent charge applies not to that period but to the one before it?—Yes; but I think we can with a little consideration find a way round that difficulty. I admit the difficulty.

8884. I take it you had not thought of that aspect?—No, I had not. I admit that; but I think we may find a way round it.

8885. Then with regard to other matters, as to important foodstuffs, there is really no such general price fixed as in the case of cereals. In the case of meat, for example, which is of so many different qualities, under normal conditions, you have not a controlled price, and it was very difficult to assess a scale of prices?—I do not think it ought to be.

8886. There is not anything of the sort in existence just now?—You could average a price. I do not profess to have worked out the whole of the thing in detail. It would take more heads than mine to do it. I only want to enunciate the principle.

8887. I quite understand. I think you say in your evidence that the costs of production vary very widely?—Yes, very widely.

8888. Both on account of different costs of tillage, and of different degrees of productiveness of the soil?—And different scales of wages and different climatic conditions. One sort of soil takes much more working than another.

8889. How does that affect your judgment of a guarantee proposal as a fixed policy?—It merely makes my point, that you must allow a very wide margin above the costs. Some men will make more money out of it than others; but you cannot help that.

8890. That is to say, if you want to increase production and bring in land that would not be cultivated without a guarantee, your guarantee must apply to that less profitable land?—Yes, it will have to. If you are going to make an overhead price, you cannot avoid one man making more money than another. That must be expected.

8891. Quite so; but you do not mean to suggest, I think, that your guarantee should be a guarantee designed to give an increased profit? It is simply a guarantee against loss, is not it?—No; I do not think a guarantee against loss will encourage farmers sufficiently.

8892. Not even if they have the chance of the open market?—I should not like to express a definite opinion. I should like to have a great many people's opinions on that. The point is, that you might guarantee a farmer against loss, and yet he might not make any profit at all, and he would not carry on. I think you must assure a farmer a reasonable opportunity of making a definite profit.

8893. You recognise it is an extraordinarily difficult proposal, that you should guarantee something more than the mere avoidance of loss in the industry?—It is very difficult, and you cannot legislate for far ahead.

8894. But is it not very desirable that you legislate some way ahead?—I do not think it is possible under the changing conditions of agriculture. Look how the costs have varied between last year and now? Go round to any group of farmers, or farmers' unions, and get from them estimates made by selected men, as I did; and go over them and check them minutely yourself, and find out what each man thinks it will cost to produce an acre of any particular crop. You will find a most astonishing variation.

8895. That applies to the amount of the guarantee in any case; but do not you think a guarantee would lose a good deal of its effectiveness if it was of very short duration? Does not the farmer look forward to his whole rotation?—Yes; by all means, a few years.

8896. You would recognise that the more years you could make it apply to, within a reasonable limit, the greater would be the value of any special guarantee?—Clearly; but I think it emphasises the impossibility of your being able to fix the price for more than a very few years ahead, because it changes very rapidly.

8897. In your experience at present, do you find that farmers have a strong disposition to put land back to grass? What is the tendency just now?—I have not been travelling about England much since I closed my investigations last year.

8898. Take your own district in Aberdeenshire?—No, I do not think so. You see, all we have done was simply to plough up half the second year's grass, and plough all the third year's grass at the end of the third year, instead of leaving it down three or four years.

8899. Did you make large increases on that scale of cultivation during the war?—I do not know what the official figures are; but it made a good deal of difference.

8900. Will that scale of cultivation be maintained if nothing is done?—No; I should certainly say they will go back to the old system, because it suits them much better.

8901. Aberdeenshire is a county where there is a very open choice between grazing and cultivation, is not it?—You see, we want the grass in the summer; and I should think if there are no special reasons, they are quite sure to go back to the system of keeping all the grass down three years, and a little of it four years.

8902. On the whole, the Aberdeenshire farmers have found it rather more profitable to graze a good deal of their land?—It is somewhat difficult to say, because it has been a year of remarkable drought. It has been the greatest drought since 1868.

8903. Yes; but I mean over a period of years it has been the tendency, has not it, to graze a good deal of the land?—They have a very strict proportion. It does not vary much.

8904. But it was varied under the pressure of the Government?—Only a little; to the extent that they ploughed up their third year's grass at the end of the second year.

8905. Is that all that happened during the war? Was there no increase of cultivation?—No; there were one or two private parks ploughed which had never been ploughed up before, but the acreage is inconsiderable.

8906. Was your Agricultural Committee not active in that matter?—You see, in Aberdeenshire we are all under rotation; and therefore the most you can possibly do is to shorten your rotation. That is all we did do.

8907. The same applies in my own district, and yet we secured a very large increase?—I did see some figures stated as to what the increase was in Aberdeenshire, but I do not remember what it was.

8908. It was not anything like 50 per cent., for example?—I cannot remember what the figure was, although I saw it published.

8909. So that there is not now a much larger area under cultivation than was the case previously?—There is no more under cultivation.

8910. Than was the case in 1914, for example?—No, because Aberdeenshire does not lend itself to it. Every spot of land is under cultivation already.

8911. But there is a great deal of grass?—No, there is not; only the strict amount, according to our rotation.

8912. But that is a pretty considerable proportion in your rotation, is not it?—No.

8913. What proportion? How many years of the whole rotation are in grass?—It is customary to keep all the grass down three years.

8914. And the tillage cycle is what?—It is a six shift system mostly.

8915. So that one third of the total is under grass?—Yes. It is only about a third, speaking off the book.

8916. So that you think no great difference would be made in that particular district?—No.

8917. But you think in other districts there would be a difference?—I cannot speak about the rest of Scotland.

8918. A question has been put to you which I want to make a little more specific. The suggestion has come to us, that there has been a considerable decline

of efficiency in farm labour. I mean, not merely that you have had inferior labour during the war, which of course everyone had; but have you heard it generally stated in your own district, or in Scotland, that there has been any failure of industry on the part of the farm workers as the result of increased wages, and so on?—All I have heard and all I have seen, is much the same in Scotland as in England. That is, the young fellows have become more restless and more independent and rather more reluctant to keep hours, and much more shifty and changing the farms more frequently. No young fellow in Aberdeenshire dreams of staying more than a term or two on any one farm. He moves on.

8919. Has that increased since the war?—It has increased very much since the war, and very much since the rise of the wages.

8920. Have you any reason to think that is permanent?—No. I think it will settle down later.

8921. It is just the disturbance of the war?—Yes; and the general disturbance of labour with the higher wages. I do not think they are any worse workers for it.

8922. Are the men who have been on the farms all the time, just as good as they were before the war?—I think they are as good. I think a great deal can be done to settle the men by giving them better housing conditions.

8923. I put the suggestion to you merely because the suggestion has been made from other quarters; but my own impression quite agrees with yours. You say that, from observation of England and Scotland, the Scotch farm servant is more efficient, on the whole?—I think he is. He is not more efficient than those in the English border country; they are just the same class there.

8924. But you think him, on the whole, a more efficient worker than the one in the South of England?—Yes, much more efficient. He is an all-round man. As you know, in Scotland and in the North of England they have not got that differentiation between your specialist man, the horseman, cattleman, and shepherd, and the ordinary daily man who is merely a labourer. They are all-round men. They are all, more or less, horsemen, cattlemen, and so on, with us, and in the North of England.

8925. Do not you think that is one of the causes which have enabled the Scotch farm servant to maintain a higher rate of wages, because he was able to turn his hand to anything?—Yes, I agree with you. He is more efficient. That is one of the causes; and also he works longer hours.

8926. Do you recognise that the increased use of machinery is a most important factor, both at present and in the future?—Yes, a very important factor.

8927. Would you say generally, that the Scotch ploughman is able to handle all the ordinary implements of the farm?—Yes. A Scotch ploughman will plough very nearly double in the day what the average Midland and South Country Englishman will do.

8928. And after a very short experience, he can use all the necessary implements of the farm, such as the reaper and binder?—Certainly.

8929. And can take it about from field to field, and so on?—Certainly.

8930. In introducing new implements, do you find the Scotch farm servants are quick in learning them?—Yes, very quick.

8931. With regard to education, I think you recognise that it is very difficult to give any kind of systematic college or institutional education in the actual performance of farm operations, is not it?—Do you mean education for the farmer, or the farm servant.?

8932. For the working boys?—It is very difficult, but it is very desirable. If they could only have classes, and let them learn upon a neighbouring farm, or have a County Council farm somewhere, and interest them in and teach them the better class of work, and the more skilled labour, I should attach the greatest importance to that. It is a thing I should like most strongly to urge.

8933. It is essentially a matter for practical instruction, is not it?—Yes; practical instruction, and giving them a liking for the work. I beg again to draw attention to an experiment which a farmer made with wonderful results in his district. It is in my Buckinghamshire report. He got some little boys on their half holidays, and paid them on the results. He educated them and got them interested, and made the work a pleasure to them.

8934. *Mr. Dallas*: I would like to ask you about these guarantees. You suggested that the guarantees should be of such a character as would allow a pretty wide margin of profit on everyone of the agricultural products?—Yes.

8935. Do you realise that that would mean a substantial burden on the taxpayers of the country?—I do.

8936. Do you think that people who are interested in other industries, would quietly agree to pay money out of their pocket to help to keep agriculture going?—No, I do not.

8937. In all probability if that were agreed to, they, in turn, would also be asking that their particular industry should be subsidised?—Yes, I am afraid they would. If the country will realise that unless they do something of the sort, they run the risk of this very great occupation of agriculture disappearing under unfavourable conditions, and they realise the very large proportion of the working classes who otherwise would live in the country will cease to live there, they might become more interested. A great deal depends on the effort of the farmers in that direction.

8938. Do you, as a Scotsman, suggest that Scottish farmers, and particularly the Aberdeenshire farmers, have lost that characteristic of independence, and standing on their own legs and fighting their own battle, without taking charity from anybody?—The Aberdeenshire farmer has only just recently been confronted with this very high scale of costs; and nobody can tell the Aberdeenshire farmer how far the costs, other than wages, are going to come down, or how soon they are going to come down; and that is a very important matter, because they have gone up from 14 to 25 per cent. the last few months.

8939. But he is making a profit over his costs?—Yes, he is doing well.

8940. Probably doing better than he ever did?—I cannot tell you what the result of the accounts will be this year, as I have not seen any. My investigations were only in 1918, but I should not think they would be so high.

8941. Have you anything to suggest to the Commission that might be done to help to encourage agriculture without imposing a burden on the taxpayer?—No, I do not see how it can be done.

8942. In the course of your investigations round the various English Counties, you have come into contact with the Unions and with the men in the Unions?—Yes.

8943. Have not you found that agricultural labourers who take an active interest in their Unions, are very often victimised and lose their job?—I do not think so now. I think that was in days gone by.

8944. Would you be surprised if I told you, as a member of the Agriculture Wages Board, that within the last month I have had one case and within recent months many cases, of agricultural labourers who have been dismissed from their employment for taking part in the work of the County Committees?—I am very surprised to hear it; and I can safely say that in the last year I visited, I could not tell you the number but upwards of 200 farms, and I never found a single case of it.

8945. 200 farms is a very small percentage out of about 500,000, is not it?—Perhaps it is a small percentage, but the 200 farms were fair samples.

8946. Would you be surprised if I told you that the wages side of the Agricultural Wages Board have had cases reported from every part of England and Wales?—Do you say there are 500,000 farmers?

8947. Mr. Batchelor tells me it is 200,000.—There will be some black sheep among them; but it is certainly not a general failing of the farmers. There are some sticky Conservative old people left, but I do not think there are many. I think the war has opened many people's eyes.

8948. Would that not account for the agricultural labourers often putting somebody else in official positions in their Unions?—No, I do not think so a bit.

8949. *Mr. Anker Simmons*: You agree that one of the best things that could happen would be, to improve the status of the farm labourer?—Yes.

8950. The proposal put by Mr. Nicholls just now falls in with your own views?—Rewarding a boy by giving extra pay if he has a certificate or diploma is, I think, an admirable suggestion.

8951. I have often spoken on the same question. Do you think it would be possible to differentiate in the same way that there is a differentiation between the bricklayer and his labourer, that that is a differentiation by having a more or less qualified farm labourer who should take a status somewhat equal to that of the ordinary mechanic?—They do, do not they? I mean, in England you pay your horseman, cattleman and your shepherd, more than you pay the ordinary labourer.

8952. They do and do not. I am one of those who believe that the feminine influence has a very great deal to do with every side of life; and what I have in my mind is this: that a domestic servant who is "walking out," as they call it, with a mechanic, rather boasts of it against her fellow domestic servant who is "walking out" with a farm labourer. Do not you think that, indirectly, that has a good deal of influence in keeping men away from farm labour, and that that would be rectified, to a great extent, if there could be a class of farm labourers who would hold as good a status as the ordinary mechanic?—I do not know what the farm labourers would say to that. It would rather slight some of them, would it not?

8953. Could it not be brought about by a system of apprenticeship?—Yes; if you begin when they are young, certainly. I think that will be merely carrying on the same system of rewarding the small boy who has got a diploma, so that when he grew to be a man you would reward him by having another diploma, and so on. If you could do that, it might assist matters.

8954. A system of apprenticeship always appeared to me to be the way out of the difficulty?—But I do not think the farm labourer is looked down upon now as he was before the war. I think that is one of the changes the war has brought about.

8955. I hope it will prove to be so. I do not want to repeat questions, but I want you seriously to consider this. Do you think it would be in the interests of agriculture as an industry, if this Commission decided that some kind of guarantee is desirable, for it to recommend a guarantee which would really involve a profit?—That is the same question of guarantee against loss or guaranteeing a profit.

8956. I am asking it again for this reason, that I am a little doubtful in my own mind as to whether you have really weighed the importance of that question?—I am not prepared to give an answer now. It is a very very difficult question indeed. I do not think it will be enough to guarantee against loss only.

8957. I should be glad if you would reconsider it; because the decision of a witness like yourself on this point, would be valuable after reconsideration?—I have seen the point discussed; and my feeling all along has been it would not be sufficient, but I am not prepared to express a definite opinion. I should like to talk to a great many people about it. It is a very difficult point indeed.

8958. Then with regard to the difference in value so far as the output of work is concerned between your farm labourer and Cumberland, and your farm labourer in Berkshire, do not you think the climatic conditions have a great deal to do with the amount of work which the men are able to perform?—The climatic conditions in Cumberland are horrible. It is the most relaxing place I was ever in in my life. When I was there it seemed to be always raining.

8959. It may rain; but that would apply to Scotland?—No; I think the thing is that they give them such good food. They have splendid meals, and they are remarkably well done.

8960. We have had a number of men down South from the North, and my experience has been that they commence by working harder and producing more output than our southern men do, but in a very short time they get down to the level of the south country?—Yes, I have heard that before. Several people have told me that has been their experience. I think very likely, comparing the south country climate with the north country climate, omitting Cumberland, that has something to do with it. There is a change of food, and a generally slack atmosphere among the other workmen too.

8961. You do not consider it would be practicable to adopt the Cumberland system of living in of farm labourers?—No. It is really very objectionable from the point of view of the farmer, and the workers would much prefer to have houses. They all have to go away now when they get married.

8962. It is not a system you would recommend?—No, I do not recommend it; but I attach great importance to the very good living. I am quite sure they live a great deal better than they would do if they had to buy their own food.

8963. In the papers that we have not yet seen dealing with the cost of production of different crops, can I take it the figures are based upon estimates, or upon actual costs of production ascertained from the farmers that you visited? Take questions like ploughing, harrowing, drilling, and so on?—There is one case I have given there which I made up last year in Northamptonshire. I took it from my own books as the actual costs. There are other costs I have given there, which were given to me by other people, such as for instance, the Farmers' Union; and they did not give the details of all the operations.

8964. One more point. I think the information you give us in these pages where you deal with farm accounts will be of great value to us; and, in order to make it quite clear, is this last column intended to show to us what the effect would be on the farmer to-day, who found himself face to face with the prices which prevailed in 1914, and with the present charge that he would have to meet for agricultural labour?—Exactly.

8965. In taking them out, I notice that, practically, it means 25 per cent. of those farms will work at a loss, and all of them at considerably less profit than in 1914?—Yes, that is so; and of course I have not taken into consideration the reduction in hours. I took the May, 1919 wages; but I did not reduce the hours.

8966. *Mr. Ashby*: Following Mr. Anker Simmons' last question; when you were arriving at these figures you did not allow for any reduction in the staff of the farm, did you?—No.

8967. Was it your general experience as an investigator, that there had been considerable reduction in the staff of the farms?—Between which dates? Do you mean since 1914?

8968. Yes?—Certainly there had. There has been a great reduction since 1914, during the war period.

8969. Is it not most natural whenever you have a considerable increase in rates of wages, that there should be an attempt at least to reduce the staff?—Looking at the statistics which I have got out, of the amount of labour employed per 100 acres, I do not see that they can reduce it much more. They certainly cannot farm well if they do.

8970. They cannot reduce it more than they have reduced it?—No, I think they are below the proper mark now.

8971. Even so, they may manage their farms with less labour than they had in 1914?—Yes, they managed to do it during war time. It has been very sketchy farming. An awful lot has been neglected, as, for instance, ditches have been left, hedges have not been cut, weeding has been allowed to go. You cannot call it farming. They did the best they could; but they could not possibly continue to farm with the same quality and number of staff that was employed during the war. In consequence of the reduction of labour then, they have arrears to catch up.

8972. You were very much impressed with the efficiency of the Cumberland farm workers?—The north country farm workers; I do not mean only Cumberland.

8973. Were you not also impressed by the high proportion of young men in those counties?—There

certainly was a very high proportion in Cumberland, because the married men mostly had to go away.

8974. May I put it to you in this way. You went to Northumberland comparatively soon after being in Oxfordshire?—Yes.

8975. Was it not your general impression that there was a far higher proportion of men, say, between 20 and 45, in Northumberland than in Oxfordshire?—I do not think I noticed anything of the sort; except in Northumberland, where the system is for whole families to work on the farm, and there are more young people there, because all the girls work on the farm until they get married. I think there may have been more boys there. I do not remember any particular impression, and I have not any figures before me at the moment.

8976. I put it to you definitely that you did think, when you were in Oxfordshire, that there was a very high proportion of old men in the County?—Of course during the war there were. I see your point. More of the younger men did go from the Midland County than from the North, undoubtedly. I think I made that comment in one of my reports.

8977. And, therefore, the comparative efficiency would be affected to that extent?—It would be. I certainly think there were more young men did go from the farms in the Midlands than went from some of these northern counties.

8978. Will you consider the question of education for a moment. I, like yourself, think it is essential that there should be some increase in skill, and certainly a great increase of interest among farm workers in their work. I want to put to you that there is no advantage to the farm worker to develop skill in certain operations for which there will be no demand, as, for instance, thatching if you keep on increasing the number of Dutch barns; or shearing, if you use more shearing machines; or hedging, if you are going to adopt systems of patent fencing. Is that not the case?—No doubt, to a certain extent, that will apply; but, then, all operations in farming are skilled.

8979. I admit that; but is it not your experience, and was it not borne out by some of your meetings with labourers in Northamptonshire, that there had been a failure to develop skill more or less because there had been a failure of the demand for skill by the farmers?—No, I do not think that; certainly not. There has been a great demand for skilled labour which was unobtainable.

8980. During the war, yes?—Before the war, I know all round the country where I farmed it was a most difficult thing to get thatchers. There were one or two thatchers in a large area, and everybody wanted them at once. It was the same way with men who could cut and lay a hedge, and with all the more skilled operations.

8981. What happens in other businesses? A boy enters, say, at 14 or 15 years of age, and there are many businesses and industries in which there is no system of apprenticeship. Do not the employers, through their other workmen, teach their young workmen the business?—Yes, certainly.

8982. So far as technical skill is concerned, would not you apply the same principle to farming?—Except that the boys complain that the old men do not take the trouble or give the time to teach them. You can quite understand a man cutting a fence, which is mostly paid by piece-work, would not bother to teach a boy. He wants to get on with his work.

8983. I remember the case some years ago of a very skilled drainer who refused to have unskilled drainers working with him because they were unskilled, and he was not able to earn as much with them as with his fairly skilled assistant. The farmer in that case paid the drainer who was working on his farm £1 for each of two youths he sought to assist him one winter. It was quite good business. It was a small sum, but it induced the drainer to teach the assistants. Do not you think the farmers would be well advised to adopt some such lines as those?—Yes, I think they might do so, perhaps.

8984. Do not you think, as a matter of fact, that that is the only method by which you can teach the great proportion of the youths engaged in agriculture the skill of their work, by providing some inducement for the men who have the skill to teach the others?—Yes, I think that is a very good point.

8985. Supposing you had a County Council farm with quite short courses, you could not teach more than, say, 100 a year?—Teach them what?

8986. Teach them any of the skilled operations?—My point was not only what we technically call skilled operations. I say all farming is skilled operations. We know that to our cost when we employed the unskilled people in war time. Why not teach them the management of horses, cattle and sheep? I am not talking only of thatching, ditching and draining; but all farming operations. Why not teach them the love of animals, and how to understand their management as well?

8987. I am glad you said that; because if you had a County Council farm of, say, 200 acres, or something like that, you might not be able to take the boys through a course that would give them what you want to give them in a greater number than, say, a dozen or 20 in each year; and the ultimate value of that depends on the extent to which they give the teaching they have gained to their fellow workers with whom they work?—Yes, quite.

8988. So you do come back to the same principle, that the development of skill in farming depends on the workers' teaching each other, and the farmer inducing them to do so?—Yes; you have made a good point.

8989. You are a business man, and I believe a very able business man. What would you rather depend on as a business man in the farming industry—your own judgment of the capacities of your land and the use to which your capital should be put, and of the trend of the markets; or some guarantee under which you might possibly be compelled to adopt certain forms of cultivation and certain forms of production that would be against your better judgment?—And would certain costs be compulsorily imposed upon me or not? Would I be free to pay what I liked to my men, and pay what I liked for all the things I required to carry on my business; or am I only going to be free on one side and be tied on the other?

8990. As far as wages are concerned, that is a question I personally could not answer; because if you got rid of the Corn Production Act you would still have other forms of what you might call compulsion, or not compulsion, but which would certainly affect your standard rate of wages. What is your general answer to that question?—My general answer is, and I cannot go further than this, that if costs are imposed upon me, and I am not left free to use my own judgment and to farm as cheaply as I possibly can, and to pay what I like and buy what I like at whatever price I like—if that is going to be imposed upon me, I want to be protected on the other side clearly.

8991. When you use the phrase "Costs are imposed" upon you, you mean, I presume, costs imposed upon you by Legislative action?—Yes, I do.

8992. So that if you were free of costs imposed upon you by Legislative action, you would be satisfied to use your own judgment as to how you would use your land and capital?—I do not think I would be contented, if you mean this: to farm now without any sort of guarantee now that prices have been raised to the present level; because they have, to a certain extent, been raised to that level artificially. I do not believe they will ever come down again; and I do not want to see them come down either.

8993. You are farming in Scotland at the present moment?—Yes; and we are paying more than the minimum wage; and in some parts of England they have paid more than the minimum wage all along.

8994. That is not then artificial?—No, it is not.

8994A. So that, as a farmer in Scotland, where wages are not artificial, you are quite prepared to go on and use your own judgment in the matter of organising your farming district?—Do you mean by using my own judgment, whether I am content to farm without any sort of guarantee or protection?

8995. Yes?—I am not; because I think all costs are so high now, and I think the future in regard to prices of what I am going to produce is so absolutely guess work and indefinite, that I am not prepared as a general farmer to go on farming. Personally, I am in a special kind of business—the pedigree

stock business. If I were in general farming, I would consider my business from year to year; and I do not say I would be prepared to go on farming without some guarantee. I do not think I would be. I might be content with a very small return. I might hold on just a bit longer to see how things went; but I would run a grave risk all the time of losing a large part of my capital, because when prices go down my capital would sink.

8996. Farming is not your only business, it is?—No, I am not dependent on my farming profits.

8997. In your other business, are not conditions somewhat uncertain at the present moment?—Yes; but then we have not the increase in costs, mind you.

8998. Are you sure of that?—The costs are merely temporary; the same thing that makes prices high makes our costs high. When prices go down, our costs will go down too. The costs in my other business have been those of freight and things like that. They work together; whereas in farming they do not.

8999. The prices in farming also depend on freights and other things like that, do not they?—Yes, partly; but all these new countries will produce, and you will have more foreign competition against home grown stuff after the war than before. I admit before the war the price of produce was at a very low level all over the world, and I say it will not go down to the 1914 level; but nobody can form an opinion worth twopence at the present time.

9000. May I suggest to you that your position is this: that your costs in agriculture have increased in much the same ratio as they have increased in other businesses, but that they are not likely to fall in the same ratio in farming as they are likely to fall in other industries?—I do not think wages are likely to fall; but I think, for instance, the cost of cake and implements and things of that sort are likely to fall.

9001. The one thing you really fear is, that wages are not likely to fall?—I do not fear it. I do not want wages to go down; I merely want to be kept in the position to pay them. The last thing I want is for wages to go down.

9002-3. I quite believe that. I want you to consider this rather carefully. You agree that wages ought not to go down. Do you not think it possible that if you had some experience of working with a smaller supply of labour, with total labour costs not rising in the same proportion as rates of wages, and some experience in the use of new machinery and general methods of economising labour, farmers are going to benefit by that experience and still keep their total labour costs in a lower proportion than rates of wages? Do I summarize your question correctly when I say I understand you to mean, that will not the introduction of new machinery and improved methods counteract the higher costs of wages? Is that what you mean?

9004. Yes, partly?—I think it will partly counteract it; but how far it is mere guess work to say. I certainly think a farmer will be able to cheapen his costs of production by improved methods and more modern machinery. I think there is hardly any limit to the improvement that can be obtained by improved methods; but how far he will be able thereby to counteract the higher costs due to wages, I do not know. It is mere guess work to say.

9005. That brings me to my last question. You say in the last paragraph of your Interim Report, it is your general opinion that farmers you have visited from whom you obtained these accounts, were better farmers than the average farmers even in their own district?—Yes, certainly.

9006. Would you tell us in what particulars they were better farmers?—According to my North Country Scotch notions they farm better; they use far more artificial manures; they went in largely for the use of basic slag and wild white clover. I came across farms of, I will not commit myself to how many acres, but where a very large proportion of the farm had been very poor, rushy, boggy sort of grass, and had been turned into first class grazing simply by basic slag and wild white clover. The result was that, although the farmer did not pay any more rent for it, he had been able to make a fine profit out of it owing to his own improvements. That is the kind of way which I could enlarge upon, by which I mean they are better farmers than the average.

9007. The use of manures is one way. Without going into so much length, could you particularise one or two others?—I thought their farms were cleaner and more up-to-date, and better farmed. When you go about a farm, you get an impression of a well farmed farm where it looks as though the man had made the most of his land. The general impression was that they certainly used more farm manure.

9008. To put it quite briefly, from the human point of view they were men who were rather more intelligent than the average, and with keener business instincts?—Yes; that is about what it was.

9009. And it is your considered opinion that if you could extend the knowledge on technical matters, and develop rather keener business instinct among the farmers, at the same time providing them with a capital, that would have a considerable effect on the prosperity of the industry?—A very great effect; more than considerable.

9010. *Mr. Rea*: With regard to the guarantee, do you agree that the guarantee is not asked for by the farmer, or is not suggested, with a view to putting profit into the farmer's pocket?—No, I do not agree. farmers, at the same time providing them with view of putting profit into his pocket—not more profit than he is making now, mind you; but more profit than he anticipates he will be able to make in the future without it.

9011. Why?—Because prices will go down, and costs will not go down in the same proportion.

9012. But my interpretation of the intention of the guarantee is, not that it is put on for the benefit of the farmer, but that it is put on in response to a national need to have more cereals grown and to have the land under the plough; and that if you insist on the farmer putting the land under the plough, you must in common justice, if you give a guaranteed minimum wage and control him in other directions, say to him: "We insist that you grow these cereals; but we recognise it is only just that we should give you some sort of guarantee against a heavy loss."?—I quite agree with you. If the country wishes to ensure its food supply, it has to pay a premium; and it is not fair to expect or ask the farmer to his own disadvantage to ensure the country's food supply by farming his land not to his own best advantage, unless you recompense him for doing so. That is perfectly fair.

9013. It is not from the farmer's point of view primarily that this guarantee is suggested, but from the point of view of the National need of having food produced in the country. Would you go further, and agree that the farmer would be just as well pleased to have no guarantee if he were given a free hand to lay down his land to grass again?—As a farmer I would not, and I think a lot of farmers would not be at all contented to have no guarantee and be allowed to lay down their land to grass.

9014. If they would not be content with that, would not they be content to risk the market?—I do not think that would meet the views of a good many of them. It would not meet mine. My point is, that so long as you have costs compulsorily imposed upon you, it is the duty of the country that imposes those costs upon you to help you to meet them. That is my point. I do not mean merely with regard to the question of laying down your land to grass or not. I mean farm prices in general.

9015. But it is a National question?—It is a National question; and I think it is for the good of the Nation.

9016. It is not merely a sectional question?—No, it is not a sectional question at all. It is a National question, because it is a National industry which effects the well-being of a very large proportion of the working classes as well as of the more well to do.

9017. You agree it is desirable that the land should be kept in cultivation?—I do, but not necessarily under corn. I think this country is naturally a stock raising country, and I think it is almost certain it will revert to that position. But you must have some sort of guarantee all the same, because you have to

meet your costs just the same. You have to grow wheat as a rotation crop in England in any case.

9018. But if you cultivate it with a view to stock raising, you still have corn in your rotation?—Yes, quite so.

9019. Supposing your proposed sliding scale could be developed and made operative, would you legislate for a certain fixed time, say 12 months ahead. I mean, you could not be having changes constantly?—No, you could not. You see the Fiars' Court is a periodic thing, and the tithe rent charge is a periodic thing. I have not worked it out in detail. It will take some very clever heads to work it out in detail.

9020. I do not mean the details, but to work it out?—Yes, it will have to be periodic adjustment, because the prices fluctuate.

9021. With regard to the price per acre of certain crops, do you think any reliable basis can be arrived at, or that we shall have to take a large number of cases of actual costs, and then strike an average which would be as nearly fair as possible?—That is the only possible course in my opinion. You cannot get anything exact.

9022. It really will be only an estimate as nearly correct as possible?—Only an estimate, because you see until you have actually threshed your corn out, as you know yourself, you never know how much you have got off the land. Then you have to apportion the various expenses to each crop, and there is a great deal of estimating in it. You can only get it approximately. You will find in different districts you will get the most bewildering variations which are plausible if not justifiable, and in some cases quite justifiable. I think the only possible thing is to get a large number of estimates and very carefully look into them and examine the basis upon which they are sent in. They used to ask me to accept all sorts of things without any basis whatever, and I simply refused to do so. They had to show me how they got at the figures. Then you will have to take a broad view and average the lot, and allow plenty of margin, on my theory of what the man loses on the round-abouts he looks to gain on the swings.

9023. Would you take each individual crop as a basis, or would you take the rotation?—Yes; you cannot take each individual crop as a basis unless you lump them all together afterwards. That is the great danger of it. That is what I want so much to impress on the Commission, if I may; the danger of taking the cost of production of each crop in rotation, and allowing for a little bit of profit on that crop, and so going through the whole rotation. You will make a perfect mess of farming if you do that. You must treat farming as a whole, and you will have to take the whole cost of farming as a whole. Either take the crops singly and lump them together afterwards, or take the whole rotation.

9024. I am very glad to have your definite opinion. That is my view too. In your pamphlet, you say you think the profits have been simply more or less a personal matter, and it is not a question of cheaply rented farms or good farms, but just well-managed farms?—I think so, to a great extent; and luck too.

9025. Do not you think that the best land is the cheapest, even with a rent at 10s. an acre more or more than that, with two equally good farmers?—Yes, I think it is, but not necessarily the land that is naturally best. Take some of that land in Northumberland, below Beal, in some of that clay district which was once derelict land. That has been turned into most beautiful feeding land by closer and basic slag and more modern treatment. I would not like to say, and I am not stating, that that sort of land might not be as profitable as some of the very fine red land.

9026. It would on that particular land, but it is not the land I have in view. Take two farms, both fairly easily worked, but one naturally good productive land and the other of poorer quality?—There is no question about it, of course, that the better land would be the more profitable.

9027. That rather contradicts the impression that this conveys?—Yes. Of course a great deal has to do with the rent. What I had in my mind was, where a man might rent some poor land of this description, cold clay land, and might get it at a very cheap rate and make money out of it, and he might make as much out of it as out of naturally good land.

9028. A good arable land might be very sandy land and would not produce so much?—Yes; and it costs a lot of money to cultivate, of course.

9029. Do you consider that a lot of the so-called profits of the farmers during the war are merely what one might call paper profits?—Certainly they are.

9030. Or deferred payments; and that a great lot of the money will have to be put back into the land?—I call it inflation of capital value; it is inflated capital. I mean it is here to-day and may be gone to-morrow. A man's capital is increased as the value of his stock has increased; but if the value of his stock goes down, away goes his capital. That is a point I want to bring out. That is why I have only taken the cash profits in my statements, and have ignored any profits you get from the balance sheet which includes the valuation.

9031. A great deal of the cash profit which I was alluding to is merely more or less illusory; because if a man wants to put back his farm into its pre-war state, he will have to return a lot of that surplus profit?—Yes.

9032. You mean to suggest that part of his cash profit is derived from neglecting his farm; and therefore he has to reinvest a great deal in his farm to bring it up to date again?—Yes, I have no doubt that is the case, but I could not say to what extent.

9033. Still, it is more or less general?—It is certainly undoubtedly the case that almost all farms that I have seen are very badly in arrear now from neglect and want of labour during the war; and no doubt they will be very expensive to bring up to date, and will want an extra amount of labour employed upon them in order to bring them back into a good state.

9034. An increase of outlay generally?—Yes; and to that extent you are right in saying that a certain amount of the cash profits which have been made will have to be put back into the land. On the other hand, one of the points I wish to bring out, and feel justified in doing so, but which I could not prove as much as I would like to have done by figures, is that a lot of these cash profits have already been put back into the farm in increased manuring and improvements in stock—not larger amounts of manure because a man got so little for his money; but a larger amount has been spent in the form of manure and improvement in the stock. I find that very frequently the case; and I was able to prove it quite to my own satisfaction, but I could not bring it out in my figures.

9035. I agree that is so. Now, with regard to the amount of labour employed upon large farms as against small farms. I am not saying this by way of running down small farms, because I do not know. I believe in them, and I believe there ought to be 100-acre farms and possibly less. But on the point of the labour employed, do you think the labour employed would be more on 4 or 5 farms of 100 acres each, than it would be on one farm of 400 or 500 acres?—No. From what I have observed I think there would be less labour employed on 5 farms of 100 acres than on one of 500 acres. But against that, mind you, there would be the occupier himself. There would be 5 occupiers.

9036. Yes; but include them, because they would naturally take part in the working operations?—I thought you meant the men employed. I stick to what I said.

9037. You think a great deal could be done by educational means?—Yes, I feel that very strongly. I think the farmer can do a very great deal himself by interesting the men and teaching the men personally.

9038. Yes; but do not you think the young farmers want more education and enlightening?—Yes, certainly I do.

9039. By extension of Agricultural Colleges or Demonstration Farms?—By the extension of Agricultural Colleges. I find the influence of the Agricultural College very wide and immensely for the good of the country round about them. In our part of the world, in Aberdeenshire, any man who wants to be

anything like a farmer, goes to the Agricultural College and works there. He ought to do that much more in England. It is the greatest possible want.

9040. In connection with that, do you advocate farms where the principles taught in the classes can be shown in operation?—I was thinking of Professor Gilchrist, if I may mention his name, and the large amount of good he does simply by going round and visiting farmers themselves.

9041. Cockle Farm brings a lot of farmers there, and they see the results; and the students go there?—Yes, it is very valuable. In Scotland they take the students about and visit all the farms round about for educational purposes. That is very desirable.

9042. You would advocate competitions for the men in thatching, ditching, hedge cutting, and so on?—Yes; I would advocate anything that would encourage the men.

9043 *Mr. Edwards*: Looking at your column of profits all along the line in 1914, I find it varies between 1s. 10d. per acre to £2 3s. per acre; and the same variation occurs in the year 1918. What occurs to me is the difficulty of meeting these variations in any guaranteed prices?—Perfectly true. That is a point that has struck me myself. These variations are absolutely bewildering.

9044. Could you suggest any reason in the method of farming or in anything else, that would account for this great variation in 1914 when things were normal?—You will find a description of the farm and of the system of farming carried on in the farm in that bundle of papers which the Chairman has, from which you will be able to draw conclusions as well as I can. Beyond that, I have ventured to suggest in a remark here the only reason which I can ascribe to it. It is in my general observations: "The great variations in the financial results upon farms which are all approximately equally well farmed"—as these are—"in their respective styles, are probably accounted for by the great difference there is in the cost of cultivating various classes of soil, by the fortune of the markets and the season in a given year in relation to the style of farming, and by the business abilities of different farmers." That is the only reason I ascribe to it. It is one of the most puzzling things, and I cannot get at the bottom of it.

9045. The great majority of your farms here are comparatively big ones?—Yes.

9046. Do you think that these farms are typical of the farms of England and Wales?—They are very typical of those counties where I took them; because I was very careful to select farms which are strictly representative of the district, both as to size and method.

9047. But do you recognise the fact that 81 per cent. of the farmers of England and Wales handle under 101 acres?—I do not know what the statistics are, except in these counties I visited. I think that meets the point of the gentleman who wants to break the 400 acres into 4 farms of 100 acres a-piece. There are a great many 100-acre farms already.

9048. My point is that the size of your farm after all is not typical. It certainly is not typical of my country, Wales, where they are still smaller, but it is hardly typical of England?—I would not like to rely upon the size of my farms to get a general average size of the country. The Board of Agriculture has published statistics in regard to the sizes.

9049. Yes, I have those here?—I think they are very typical farms, both as to size and the style of the farm of the visited district. My trouble was, I visited an immense number of farmers who were not able to supply me with any figures, and therefore my choice was limited.

9050. You did not go over the border to Wales, did you?—No, I was withdrawn. The investigation came to an end when I got as far as the North Riding of Yorkshire.

Chairman: We are very much obliged to you.

(The Witness withdrew.)

ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE.

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APPENDIX No. I.

Handed in by Mr. P, W. Clarkson, in connection with his evidence given on August 27th, 1919.

Milk production.

Details of costings for third period : February 1st to April 30th, 1919. (*See* page 251.)

Details of Costings.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Home-grown Fodder :—			
Clover—4 cwts. per day at £7 15*s.* per ton (whole period)	137	19	0
Straw—3 cwts. per day at £4 per ton (whole period)	37	4	0
Roots—1 ton per day at £2 10*s.* per ton (whole period)	202	10	0
Straw (purchased), 4 tons at £4 2*s.* 6*d.*	16	10	0
Cake (purchased)	168	16	0
Labour	81	4	8
Rent and rates on buildings	4	2	6
Depreciation loss on cows	10	9	0
Depreciation on machinery and dairy utensils	4	7	0
Repairs	1	10	0
Washing utensils	6	13	6
Delivery to station	13	7	0
	684	12	8
Deductions :—			
12 Calves ... £22 9 3			
Manurial values ... £30 0 0			
	52	9	3
	£632	3	5

APPENDIX No. II.

Handed in by Mr. R. COLTON FOX as part of his evidence in chief, September 2nd, 1919.

INCOME.

	1916. £ s. d.	1916. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.
Live Stock Sales—						
Horses	217 10 0		322 7 0		631 1 6	
Cattle	1,097 4 9		1,164 3 9		1,849 3 3	
Sheep	448 10 6		470 8 0		718 15 2	
Pigs	41 1 6		48 14 6		92 12 0	
		1,804 6 0		2,005 13 3		3,291 11 11
Dairy produce and poultry ...		63 6 10		103 19 4		156 19 2
Corn		314 16 0		558 19 2		808 1 9
Sundry receipts		88 13 4		18 14 6		7 3 0
*Valuation, 31st March		2,445 0 6		2,375 7 6		2,550 7 6
Balance, being loss for the year ...		357 17 6		—		—
		£5,074 0 11		£5,062 13 9		£6,814 3 4

* In valuations at 31st March, 1915, 1916 and 1917 nothing was included for stocks in hand of corn, hay, cake, manures, etc.

EXPENDITURE.

	1916. £ s. d.	1916. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.
Live Stock Purchases—						
Cattle	1,482 9 1†		757 19 7		1,503 12 11	
Horses	291 18 5		171 13 0		305 5 9	
Sheep	631 9 2		201 14 9		599 8 4	
Pigs, etc.	{ 1 15 6 / 69 10 0 }		10 2 6		29 10 0	
		2,477 2 2		1,141 9 10		2,437 17 0
Feeding stuffs, etc.		— — —†		298 3 2		189 12 2
Corn		252 13 4		198 1 9		254 10 8
Wages		301 19 9		330 15 7		402 19 9
Rates and Taxes		123 17 1		79 6 10		101 15 5
Repairs		123 11 3		33 14 10		57 4 10
Insurances		37 7 5		18 5 10		27 10 1
Sundries		344 2 5		94 10 2		84 17 10
Rent (Sch. "A")		292 2 0		312 0 0		312 0 0
Upkeep of car (⅓ proportion) ...		12 6 0		—		
Depreciation on Implements ...		—		45 2 9		44 0 0
*Valuation, 1st April		1,108 19 6		2,445 0 6		2,519 0 2§
Balance, being profit for year ...		—		66 2 6		382 15 5
		£5,074 0 11		£5,062 13 9		£6,914 3 4

† Cake is included under cattle for 1916.
§ Includes £143 12s. 8d. for clover and oats.

BALANCE SHEETS.

	1916. £ s. d.	1916. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.
Sundry Creditors...	22 13 5					36 16 4
Loan	200 0 0					
Capital account—						
Balance at 1st April ...		2,869 6 9		3,493 2 6		
Add advances during year...		1,339 6 9		143 12 8*		
Profit as per P. & L. ac./ ...		66 2 6		382 15 5		
		4,274 16 0		4,019 10 7		
Deduct drawings		781 13 6		1,132 2 8		
Balance	2,869 6 9		3,493 2 6		3,199 7 11	
		£3,092 0 2		£3,493 2 6		£3,235 18 3

* Value of clover and oats omitted from valuation 31st March, 1917.

BALANCE SHEETS.

	1916. £ s. d.	1916. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1917. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.	1918. £ s. d.
Cash in hand	11 14 4		54 3 5		134 16 0	
Cash in Bank	181 1 2		617 8 11		56 3 6	
Sundry Debtors	2 16 0				41 10 0	
Valuation, 31st March	2,445 0 6		2,375 7 6		2,550 7 6	
Implements—						
Balance at 1st April		451 8 2		446 2 8		433 1 3
Less depreciation		—		—		—
		451 8 2		446 2 8		433 1 3
Add Additions		—		—		—
Balance	451 8 2		446 2 8		433 1 3	
		£3,092 0 2		£3,493 2 6		£3,235 18 3

Wheat.

Cost per acre—Cube Field.

	£	s.	d.
1 Ploughing	1	3	0
1 Drag Harrow	0	4	0
2 Harrows	0	4	0
Drilling	0	2	6
3 Bushels wheat at 10*s.* 3*d.*—82*s.* per quarter	1	10	9
2 Harrows	0	3	0
Tillage	2	11	3
Rolling and Harrowing	0	4	0
Hoeing	0	2	6
Opening-out	0	1	4
Reaping	0	6	0
Twine	0	6	0
Stooking	0	2	6
Forking	0	1	4
Raking	0	1	0
Carting	0	12	9
Raking and Getting	0	1	6
Thatching	0	1	6
Threshing	0	18	3
Winnowing	0	2	0
Delivery—4-mile haul	0	8	0
Rent, Rates and Tithe	1	9	9
	£10	17	11

Oats.

Cost per acre—Flatts Field.

	£	s.	d.
1 Ploughing	1	3	0
1 Harrows	0	4	0
3 Harrows	0	6	0
Drilling	0	2	6
14 st. Oats at 2*s.* 8½*d.* per st.—65*s.* per qr.	1	17	11
Tillage	2	0	9
2 Harrows	0	3	0
Rolling	0	2	0
Hoeing	0	2	6
Harvest, Threshing and Delivery and Rates (*see* Wheat Crop)	4	11	11
	£10	13	7

Oats.

Grass Ploughed 1918.

	£	s.	d.
1 Ploughing	1	3	0
1 Quartering	0	18	0
1 Dragging	0	4	0
4 Harrows	0	8	0
Drilling	0	2	6
14-st. Oats	1	17	11
4 Harrows	0	8	0
Tillage	2	0	9
Rolling	0	2	0
Hoeing	0	2	6
Harvest, Threshing, delivery and rates. (*See* Wheat Crop)	4	11	11
	£11	18	7

Barley on Root Ground.

	£	s.	d.
1 Ploughing	1	3	0
3 Harrows	0	6	0
Drilling	0	2	6
3 bushels seed at 10*s.*—80*s.* per qr.	1	10	0
2 Harrows	0	3	0
Tillage	2	0	9
Rolling	0	2	0
Hoeing	0	2	6
Harvest, Threshing, delivery and rates. (*See* Wheat Crop)	4	11	11
	£10	1	8

APPENDIX No. III.

Handed in by Mr. Castell Wrey in connection with his evidence given on September 2nd, 1919.

1.—Tables showing Costs of Production of certain Crops in 1917-18, with Financial Returns, where it can be given

Table 1 (*a*).

Wheat "Squarehead Master" after Beans (10 *acres*).

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	—	£	s.	d.
1917.														
Sept. 19	2	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	5	6/-	—	—	Ploughing, ½ day	1	0	6
„ 20	7	4/6	2	2/-	—	—	16	6/-	—	—	„ 1 „	6	11	6
„ 21	3	4/6	2	2/-	—	—	8	6/-	—	—	„ 1 „	3	5	6
„ 22	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	Finish Ploughing, ¾ day	1	4	9
Oct. 17	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Disc Harrowing	1	2	6
„ 18	2	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Drilling	1	9	0
„ 18	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Harrowing, 1 day	0	16	6
											22 bushels Wheat sown at 75/- per qtr.	10	6	3
Aug. 12	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cutting with Binder, ½ day	0	13	6½
	2	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mowing Round, ½ day	0	8	1
											Stooking cost, 1/3 per acre in this field	0	12	6
„ 25	10	8/1	—	—	6	5/	8	6/-	—	—	Carting Wheat, ½ day	1	19	8
„ 29	8	8/1	—	—	8	5/-	8	6/-	—	—	„ ¾ „	5	14	6
„ 29	—	—	1	5/-	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Horse Raking, ¾ day	0	8	3
											6-balls Binder Twine at 5/- per ball	1	10	0
	2	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Thatching—1 day	0	16	2
											Threshing—Hire of engine at £1 per day—1½ days	1	10	0
	4	4/2	—	—	5	2/9	—	—	—	—	Engine Driver, 6/8 ; Feeder, 5/6	2	2	7
											Coal for Threshing—11 cwts. at £2 per ton ...	1	2	0
											Cartage of Wheat to Station, 38 qtrs. at 1/- per qtr.	1	18	0
											Rent—10/- per acre	5	0	0
											Rates—2/8 in the £ on £4	0	10	8
											Management at 2/9 per acre	1	7	6
											Interest on Machinery at 2/2 per acre...	1	1	8
												£52	11	8
												£	s.	d.
											C. R. sold, 33½ qtrs. at 75/- per qtr.	125	12	6
											„ 5 „ 68/- „	17	0	0
												142	12	6
											Cost per acre, £5 5s. 2d....	52	11	8
											Profit	£90	0	10
											Cost per Qtr., £1 7s. 3½d.			

Table 1 (*b*).

Wheat after Clover (*Pt.* 32 *acres*).

1917.												£	s.	d.
Sept.											Ploughed by Government Tractor, at £1 per acre...	32	0	0
„ 12	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	Discing	0	19	1
„ 13	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	„	0	19	1
„ 14	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	„	0	19	1
„ 15	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„	1	7	1
„ 17	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„	1	7	1
„ 18	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/	—	—	„	1	7	1
„ 20	2	9/1	2	5/-	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	3	4	2
„ 21	4	4/6	2	2/-	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Drilling	2	18	0
	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	3/4	—	—	Harrowing	1	9	0
	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	Disc Harrowing...	0	14	6
„ 22	4	4/6	2	2/	—	—	6	6/	—	—	Drilling	2	18	0
	3	4/6	—	—	—	—	9	3/4	—	—	Harrowing	2	3	6
											8 qtrs. 2 bush. Squarehead Master grown in Coast, at 70/- per qtr.	28	17	6
											Carried forward	£81	3	2

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	—	—
												£ s. d.
											Brought forward	81 3 2
1918.												
Mar. 7	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	0 16 6
Apr. 10	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	,, ...	1 13 0
May 17	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Sowing Sulphate Ammonia, ½ day	0 5 3
											6 cwt. ,, at £16 10s. per ton ...	4 19 –
Aug. 9	4	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mowing Road Round, ½ day	0 16 2
,, 10	2	9/1	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Cutting with Binder	2 14 2
	3	9/1	—	—	—	—	9	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ,, ...	4 0 3
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	3/4	Stooking, ½ day	0 10 0
,, 12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	3/4	,, 1 ,, ...	1 0 0
,, 13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	3/4	,, 1 ,, ...	1 0 0
,, 14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	3/4	,, ½ ,, ...	0 13 4
,, 20	4	8/1	—	—	1	5/-	5	6/-	—	—	Carting Wheat	3 7 4
	5	8/1	—	—	1	5/-	5	6/-	2	3/4	,, ½ day	2 1 0½
,, 21	9	8/1	—	—	6	5/-	10	6/-	3	3/4	,, ½ ,, ...	4 6 4½
,, 22	4	8/1	—	—	2	5/-	5	6/-	2	3/4	,, ¾ ,, ...	2 19 3
											25 balls Binder Twine at 5s.	6 5 0
Nov. 20	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Thatching—4 days	2 0 0
											Threshing—Hire of Engine at £1 per day—2 days	2 0 0
Dec. 10	7	5/-	—	—	4	3/4	—	—	—	—	Engine Driver, 6/8 ; Feeder, 5/6	3 0 6
,, 11	9	5/-	—	—	6	3/4	—	—	—	—	,, ,, ,, ,, ...	3 17 2
											Coal for Threshing—14 cwts. at £2 per ton ...	1 8 0
											Rent—5/- per acre	8 0 0
											Rates—2/8 in £ on £6 8/-	0 17 1
											Management—at 2/9 per acre...	4 8 0
											Int. on Machinery at 2/2 per acre	3 9 4
											Cartage to Station—2 mls. at 1/- per qtr.	4 16 0
											Threshing—Hire of Engine—1½ days at £1 per day	1 10 0
Feb 27	5	5/-	—	—	4	3/4	—	—	—	—	Engine Driver, 6/8 ; Feeder, 5/6—1½ days	3 15 9
											Coal for Threshing—10 cwts. at £2 per ton ...	1 0 0
												£158 12 8
											Cr.	
												£ s. d.
Dec. 10											Threshed—50 qtrs. good Wheat at 75/-	187 10 0
Dec. 11											,, 3 ,, tail ,, 68/-	10 4 0
Feb 27											,, 46 ,, good ,, 75/-	172 10 0
											,, 1 ,, tail ,, 68/-	3 8 0
												373 12 0
											Cost of Production	158 12 8
											Profit	£214 19 4
												£ s. d.
											Cost per acre	4 19 1¼
											,, qtr.	1 11 8½

TABLE 1 (*c*).

Spring Oats after Old Turf (12 *Acres*).

												£ s. d.
1918.												
Feb. 4	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	5 10 3
,, 8	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, ...	5 10 3
,, 9	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, ...	5 10 3
,, 11	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, ½ day	2 15 1½
Mar. 8	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	Drilling Oats	0 19 3
	4	4/6	—	—	—	—	10	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	3 18 0
					1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	,, ...	0 14 9
,, 9	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	5	6/-	—	—	,, ...	1 19 0
											12 sacks Oats sown at 60/- per qtr.	17 10 0
,, 14	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Cambridge Rolling	0 16 6
,, 15	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ½ day	0 8 3
Apr. 12	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, 1 day	0 16 6
,, 13	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ...	0 16 6
,, 26	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ...	0 16 6
May 10	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/	—	—	,, ,, ...	0 16 6
,, 11	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ...	0 16 6
June 10	—	—	—	—	4	2/9	—	—	—	—	Pulling Charlock	0 11 0
,, 11	—	—	—	—	13	2/9	—	—	—	—	,, ,, ...	1 15 9
,, 12	—	—	—	—	11	2/9	—	—	—	—	,, ,, ...	1 10 3
,, 13	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Mowing ,, ...	0 16 6
,, 14	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ,, ½ day	0 8 3
,, 18	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Turning ,, ...	0 10 6
,, 21	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Horse Raking	0 10 6
	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	—	—	—	—	Turning Charlock Roots	0 2 9
	5	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	Carting, ½ day	1 7 4½
Aug. 29	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cutting Oats, ½ day	0 13 6½
	4	8/1	—	—	5	5/-	—	—	—	—	Setting-up Stooks, ½ hr.	0 3 3½
	5	8/1	—	—	3	5/-	1	6/-	—	—	Carting Oats, ½ day	1 19 8½
											Binder Twine, 3 balls at 5s. per ball	0 15 0
											Thatching—nil.	
											Threshing. Hire of engine at £1 per day	0 10 0
											Carried forward	£61 8 4½

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	—	—
												£ s. d.
											Brought forward	61 8 6½
	5	7/1	—	—	4	5/-	—	—	—	—	Engine driver, 6/8 ; feeder, 5/6—½ day	3 7 7
											Coal for Threshing, 8 cwts. at £2 per ton	0 16 0
											Cartage—nil.	
											Rent—15/- per acre	9 0 0
											Rates—2/8 in £ on £7 4/-	0 19 2½
											Management, at 2/9 per acre	1 13 0
											Interest on Machinery, at 2/2 per acre	1 6 0
												£78 10 3½
											Cr.	
											Oats threshed—12 qtrs. consumed on farm, at 36/-	£21 12 0
												£ s. d.
												78 10 3½
												21 12 0
											Loss	£56 18 3½
											£ s. d.	
											Cost per acre 6 10 10½	
											Cost per qtr. 6 10 10½	

TABLE I (*d*).

Winter Oats after Clover (6*a.* 0*r.* 13*p.*)

1917–18												£ s. d.
Sept. 28	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	0 16 6
Oct. 2	3	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	,, ...	2 9 6
,, 5	3	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	,, ...	2 9 6
,, 13	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, ½ day	0 8 3
,, 19	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Disc Drill, ¾ day	0 12 4½
											3½ bush. per acre—Winter Oats sown at 50/- per qr., 21 bush.	6 11 3
,, 19	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Harrowing twice over	1 2 6
Apr. 25	—	—	1	2/-	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	,, twice	0 14 0
	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Rolling Oats, ¼ day	0 6 6¼
Aug. 2	2	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mowing round and mowing parts which were down, 1 day	0 16 2
,,	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cutting with Binder, ¾ day	1 0 8¾
											Stooking in this field cost 1/4 per acre	0 8 0
											4 balls Binder Twine at 4/- per ball...	0 16 0
Sept. 17	5	8/1	—	—	3	5/-	1	6/-	—	—	Carting Oats, ½ day	1 19 8½
											Stack not thatched.	
,, 25											Threshing—Hire of engine at £1 per day—½ day ...	0 10 0
											Coal for threshing, 5 cwts. at £2 per ton	0 10 0
	4	5/-	—	—	5	3/4	—	—	—	—	Engine Driver, 6/8 ; Feeder, 5/6—½ day	1 4 5
											No cartage—Oats consumed at home.	
											Rent, 12/- per acre	3 12 0
											Rates, 2/8 in £ on £2 17s. 8d.	0 7 8
											Management at 2/9 per acre	0 16 6
											Interest on machinery at 2/2 per acre	0 13 0
												£28 4 2½
											C. R., Sept. 25—Threshed 34 qrs. of Oats.	
											Cost of Production...	£28 4 2½
											£ s. d.	
											Cost per qtr. ... ... — 16 7	
											,, acre ... ... 4 14 —	

TABLE I (*e*).

Barley after Carrots (19 *acres*).

1918												£ s. d.
Jan. 28	—	—	—	—	4	2/9	—	—	—	—	Forking Twitch, ¼ day...	0 5 6
Feb. 5	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	5 10 3
,, 6	5	4/6	—	—	4	2/9	17	6/-	—	—	,, ...	6 15 6
,, 7	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, ¼ day	2 15 1¼
,, 11	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, ¼ ,, ...	2 15 1¼
,, 12	4	4/6	—	—	3	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, 1 ,, ...	5 10 3
,, 16	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	,, 1 ,, ...	1 11 3
,, 18	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	,, 1 ,, ...	1 11 3
,, 23	4	4/6	—	—	4	2/9	14	6/-	—	—	,, 1 ,, ...	5 18 0
Mar. 9	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Disc Harrowing	2 5 0
,, 11	4	4/6	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	Drilling Barley	2 19 6
,, 11	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Disc Harrowing	2 5 0
,, 11	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	1 13 0
											51 bushels Barley sown at £4 per quarter	25 10 0
											Carried forward	£66 19 9

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	—	—
												£ s. d.
1918.											Brought forward	66 19 9
Mar. 14	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	0 16 6
„ 18	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Chain Harrowing and Rolling	0 16 6
„ 19	—	—	—	—	5	2/9	—	—	—	—	Forking Twitch	0 13 9
Apr. 29	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 16 6
May 3	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	„	0 16 6
„ 16	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Horse-hoeing	0 13 3
„ 17	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	0 16 6
„ 17	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Horse-hoeing	0 13 3
„ 25	—	—	—	—	4	2/9	—	—	—	—	Spudding Thistles	0 11 0
„ 28	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 16 6
	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	„ ½ day	0 4 4½
	—	—	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	Spudding Thistles	0 5 6
„ 29	—	—	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ „	0 5 6
„ 30	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 10 6
„ 30	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	„	0 8 9
Aug. 3	2	9/1	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Cutting with Binder, ½ day	1 7 1
„ 1	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„ „ „	0 13 6½
„ 1	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„ „ „ ... —	0 13 6½
	1	9/1	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cutting with Binder, ¼ day	0 6 9
											10 balls Binder Twine at 5/- a ball	2 10 0
					4	5/-	—	—	—	—	Stooking, ½ day	0 10 0
					4	5/-	—	—	—	—	„ ¾ „	0 15 0
	5	8/1	—	—	3	5/-	4	6/-	—	—	Carting Barley	3 19 5
	5	8/1	—	—	3	5/-	4	6/-	—	—	„ „ ¾ day	2 19 6½
	2	8/1	—	—	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	Mowing Round, ¼ day	0 6 6½
	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Thatching Stack, 1¼ days	0 15 0
											Threshing—Hire of Engine, 2 days at £1 per day	2 0 0
	5	5/-	—	—	4	3/9	—	—	—	—	Feeder, 5/6 ; Engine Driver, 6/8, 2 days	5 4 4
											Coal for Threshing—15 cwt. at £2 per ton	1 10 0
											Rent, 12/- per acre	11 8 0
											Rates 2/8 in £ on £9/2/4½	1 4 0
											Management at 2/9 per acre	2 12 3
											Int. on Machinery at 2/2 per acre	2 1 2
											Cartage—50½ qtrs. Barley at 1/- per qtr., to station	2 10 6
												£119 11 3¾
											Threshed—	£ s. d.
											50¼ qtrs. good Barley at 71/- per qtr.	179 5 6
											15 „ light „ 65/- „	48 15 0
												228 0 6
												119 11 3¾
											Profit	£108 9 2¼
											£ s. d.	
											Cost per acre 6 5 10	
											Cost per qtr. 1 16 6	

TABLE 1 (*f*).

Mangolds after Ensilage (*part 6 acres*).

												£ s. d.
1917.												
Sept. 26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Steam Ploughed at 9*d*. per acre to each of 4 men, ¼ day	0 13 6
	—	—	1	2/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	As Cook, ¼ day	0 1 6
	—	—	1	2/-	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	Water and Coal Cart, ¾ day	0 10 6
											Coal used—15 cwt. at £2 per ton	1 10 0
Dec. 10	3	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	Ridging	2 9 6
1918.												
Feb. 21	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cultivating	1 2 6
„ 22	2	4/6	1	2/-	4	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	Manure Cart	2 18 0
„ 23	4	4/6	1	2/-	1	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	„ „	2 18 9
„ 23	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	1 11 3
„ 23	—	—	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	Spreading manure	0 5 6
„ 25	—	—	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ „ ½ day	0 2 9
„ 26	—	—	—	—	5	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ „ ½ „	0 6 10½
Mar. 1	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	1 11 3
	2	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	„	2 7 9
„ 2	4	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	Manure Cart, ½ day	1 2 0
„ 2	2	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	7	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	2 13 0
„ 4	1	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	„	1 10 6
„ 7	1	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	„	1 10 6
„ 9	1	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	„ ¼ day...	0 7 7½
„ 11	1	4/6	1	2/-	—	—	4	6/-	—	—	„ ½ day...	0 15 3
„ 19	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	„	0 16 6
May 2	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Disc Harrowing	1 2 6
	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Sowing manure, ½ day	0 5 3
											18 cwt. Super at £15/7/6 per ton, 6 cwt. Sul. Amm. at £6/10/-	15 15 9
„ 3	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Drilling Mangolds, ½ day	0 6 7½
											46 lbs. own Seed grown at 2/6 per lb.	5 15 0
„ 11	4	4/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Hoeing and Setting Out, ½ day	0 8 4
											Carried forward	£50 18 5¼

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	—	£ s. d.
1917.											Brought forward ...	50 18 5½
May 12	6	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	Hoeing and setting out, 1 day	1 10 6
„ 13	4	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ „ 1 day	1 2 2
„ 13	1	4/2	1	2/	—	.	—	—	—	—	„ „ ½ day	0 3 1
„ 14	6	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ „ ½ day	0 15 3
June 4	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Hoeing	0 13 3
„ 29	—	—	—	—	13	2/9	—	—	-	—	„ ½ day	0 8 11½
July 5	2	4/6	—	—	2	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	„	1 6 6
„ 10	—	—	2	2/-	2	2/9	3	6/-	—	—	„ ½ day	0 5 4½
„ 23	6	4/2	—	—	7	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ ½ day	1 2 1½
	2	4/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Sow soot, ½ day	0 4 2
											12 cwt. at £3 per ton	1 16 0
Aug. 5	—	—	—	—	4	2/9	—	—	—	—	Hoeing	0 11 0
„ 6	—	—	—	—	5	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ ½ day	0 6 10½
„ 7	—	—	—	—	3	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ 1 „	0 8 3
„ 8	—	—	—	—	3	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ 1 „	0 8 3
„ 9	—	—	—	—	3	2/9	—	—	—	—	„ 1 „	0 8 3
Nov. 13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	3/4	Getting up Mangolds, ½ day	1 0 0
„ 14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	3/4	„ „ 1 „	1 10 0
„ 15	4	4/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	„ „ ½ „	0 8 4
„ 16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	3/4	„ „ ½ „	0 16 8
	4	4/2	1	2/-	1	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	Carting, ½ day, 21 loads	1 8 8½
„ 18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	3/4	Getting up Mangolds, 1 day	0 16 8
	2	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	3	3/4	Carting, 31 loads	2 19 10
„ 19	1	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	3	3/4	„ 30 „	2 15 8
									6	3/4	Pulling Mangolds	1 0 0
„ 20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	3/4	„ „	1 10 0
	4	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	Carting, 10 loads, ½ day	0 14 6½
„ 21	4	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	„ 33 „ 1 „	2 18 2
„ 25	4	4/2	—	—	2	2/9	6	6/-	—	—	„ 31 „ 1 „	2 18 2
											Rent—10/- per acre	3 0 0
											Rates—2/8 in £ on £2 8/-	0 6 5
											Management at 2/9 per acre	0 16 6
											Interest on Machinery at 2/2 per acre	0 13 0
											Cost of Production	£88 1 1½
											£ s. d.	
											Cost per ton 0 12 7	
											„ acre 14 13 6	

TABLE 1 (*g*).

Swedes after Carrot failure, 9a. 1r. 22p.

1917–18												£ s. d.
Dec. 31	3	4/6	—	—	2	2/9	11	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	4 5 0
Jan. 1	4	4/6	—	—	2	2/9	11	6/-	—	—	„	4 9 6
	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	„	1 11 3
	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	4	6/-	—	—	„	1 11 3
Apr. 25	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Sowing Manure, ½ day	0 5 3
„ 26	1	4/6	—	.	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	„ „ 1 „	0 10 6
											4 cwts. Super. Phosphate and 1 cwt. Sulphate Amm., per acre	18 0 0
„ 26	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	1 2 6
„ 27	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„	1 2 6
„ 29	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cultivating	1 2 6
„ 29	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	—	—	„ and Harrowing	0 16 6
„ 29	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Drilling Carrots	0 15 0
					1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 14 9
											Carrots sown—50 lbs. at 6/- per lb.	15 0 0
May 2	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 8 9
June 1	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	0 10 6
„ 4	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	„	0 8 9
July 11	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Cultivating, ½ day	0 5 7½
„ 12	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	Ploughing	1 2 6
„ 12	1	4/6	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	—	—	„ ½ day	0 11 3
„ 12	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	—	—	„ 1 „	1 2 6
„ 13	3	4/6	—	—	—	—	9	6/-	—	—	„ 1 „	3 7 6
„ 16	2	4/6	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	—	—	Drilling Swedes	0 15 0
											Swedes sown—27 lbs. at 3/- per lb.	4 1 –
„ 16	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	Harrowing	0 8 9
„ 16	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	Rolling	0 14 9
„ 17	—	—	—	—	1	2/9	1	6/-	—	—	„ ½ day	0 4 1½
Aug. 5	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	Horsehoeing	0 19 4
„ 6	1	4/6	—	—	1	2/9	2	6/-	—	—	„	0 19 3
„ 7	7	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Singling Swedes, ½ day	0 14 3½
„ 7	4	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	„ „ ¼ „	0 8 1
Sept. 8	2	8/1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	„ „ ¼ „	0 4 0½
„ 8	—	—	—	—	6	5/-	—	—	—	—	„ „ ¼ „	0 7 6
„ 9	—	—	—	—	4	5/-	—	—	—	—	„ „ 1 „	1 0 0
„ 10	—	—	—	—	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	„ „ 1 „	0 10 0
											Rent, 12, per acre	5 12 7½
											Rates, 2/8 in the £ on £4/10/1	0 12 0
											Management at 2/9 per acre, being ¼ agent's salary and the whole of the bailiff's wages	1 4 9
											Interest on Machinery at 2/2 per acre	0 19 6
												£78 18 10½

2.—Tables showing Costs of Production of certain Crops in 1918-19, with Financial Returns, where it can be given.

TABLE 2 (*a*).

Hay (8 *Acres*).

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate.	Prisoners.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	—	—
1919.												£ s. d.
May 1	—	—	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	2	6/-	Chain Harrowing, ¼ day	0 4 0½
July 7	2	9/	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	Cutting, ¾ day	1 1 0
„ 17	1	8/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mowing Round, ¾ day	0 6 0
„ 18	1	8/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	Side Raking, ½ day	0 7 0
	1	8/	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	Tedding Hay, ½ day	0 7 0
	4	10*d.* an hr.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Cocking Hay, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	0 10 0
„ 30	1	8/-	—	—	6	5/-	—	—	—	—	Shaking-out Hay, ¼ day	0 9 6
	7	8/-	—	—	6	5/-	—	—	4	6/-	Carting Hay, ¼ day	1 7 6
	—	—	—	—	2	5/-	—	—	2	6/-	Horse Raking, ¼ day	0 5 6
„ 31	—	—	—	—	2	5/-	—	—	2	6/-	„ ¼ „	0 5 6
	4	8/-	2	3/-	1	5/-	—	—	6	6/-	Carting Hay, ¼ day	0 19 9
											Rent—25/- per acre for 9 months	7 10 0
											Rates—2/8 in the £ , ...	1 0 0
											Int. on Machinery at 2/2 per acre	0 17 4
											Management at 2/9 per acre	1 2 0
												£16 12 1½

TABLE 2 (*b*).

Hay (34 *Acres*).

												£ s. d.
1919.												
Mar. 11	2	5/-	1	4/-	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	Sowing Basic Slag	1 12 0
	1	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	Carting Slag to Field	1 3 0
„ 13	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Sowing Slag	1 2 0
„ 14	1	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	„	0 11 0
„ 15	1	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	„	0 11 0
„ 17	2	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	„	1 2 0
„ 18	1	5/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	„	0 11 0
											5 cwts. per acre Basic Slag sown, at £4 per ton ...	34 0 0
July 1	2	9/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	Cutting Hay	2 2 0
	2	9/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	„	2 2 0
„ 4	1	9/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Finishing Mowing—½ day	0 10 6
„ 7	2	8/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Turning Hay	1 8 0
„ 8	—	—	1	4/	—	—	1	4/4	2	6/-	Horse Raking	1 0 4
„ 9	—	—	1	4/-	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	„	0 10 0
„ 10	4	8/-	—	—	1	5/-	1	4/4	6	6/-	Turning and Raking Hay—½ day	1 18 8
	15	8/-	—	—	7	5/-	—	—	16	6/-	Carting Hay	12 11 0
„ 11	2	8/-	1	4/-	2	5/-	1	4/4	6	6/-	„ ½ day	1 15 2
											Rent, 18/- per acre, for 9 months	22 19 0
											Rates, at 2/8 in the £	3 1 3
											Interest on Machinery, at 2/2 per acre	3 13 8
											Management, at 2/9 per acre	4 13 6
												£98 17 1
											Estimated Crop—12 cwts. per acre.	

TABLE 2 (*c*).

Wheat after Fallow (36 *acres*).

												£ s. d.
1918.												
											Steam Ploughing at 9d. per acre each—4 men ...	5 8 0
	—	—	1	4/-	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Water and Coal Cart	0 16 0
	—	—	1	3/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	Cook	0 3 0
Sept. 9	2	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	5	6/-	Harrowing and Drilling	2 5 4
„ 11	—	—	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	2	6/-	Harrowing	15 4
„ 12	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„	2 8 0
„ 13	—	—	—	—	2	3/4	—	—	6	6/-	„	2 2 8
											Wheat sown—2 bush. per acre at 79/- per qtr. ...	3 11 0
1919.												
May 21	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	6/-	Harrowing	2 2 0
„ 22	1	7/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	„	1 5 0
Aug. 11	4	8/-	—	—	1	5/-	—	—	—	—	Cutting road round Wheat—¼ day	0 9 3
„ 12	2	9/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	Cutting with Binder	2 14 0
„ 13	2	9/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„ „ „ —½ day	1 7 0
												£57 6 7

TABLE 2 (*d*).

Barley after Potatoes (12 *acres*)

—	Men.	Rate.	Boys.	Rate.	Women.	Rate	Prisoners.	Rate.	Horses.	Rate.	——	—	£	s.	d.
1919.															
Apr. 11	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	Ploughing		1	4	0
„ 12	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„		2	8	0
„ 14	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„ —½ day		0	12	0
„ 15	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„ —1 day		2	8	0
„ 16	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„ —1 day		2	8	0
„ 19	4	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	6/-	„ —½ day		1	2	6
„ 21	8	6/-	—	—	2	3/9	1	4/4	15	6/-	Harrowing and drilling—½ day		7	9	10
„ 22	—	—	—	—	1	3/9	—	—	1	6/-	Harrowing		0	2	9
											30 bush. Barley sown at 79s. per qtr.		11	16	3
„ 23	—	—	—	—	1	3/9	—	—	1	6/-	Harrowing—¼ day		0	2	5½
„ 24	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	Ploughing bottom of field		1	4	0
„ 26	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Harrowing		0	18	0
May 13	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Rolling		0	18	0
„ 21	—	—	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	1	6/-	„ —½ day		0	5	1
„ 22	—	—	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	1	6/-	„ —1 day		0	10	2
„ 30	3	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	Sowing Sulphate of Ammonia—½ day		0	12	0
											1 cwt. Sulphate of Ammonia sown at £16 7s. 6d. per ton (per acre)		9	16	6
„ 31	1	7/7	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	Rolling		0	19	7
June 2	1	7/7	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	„ —½ day		0	12	9
					4	4/2					Spud Thistles		0	16	8
„ 3	2	6/-	—	—	1	4/2	2	4/4	—	—	„ „ —½ day		0	12	5
													£50	5	11

TABLE 2 (*e*).

Spring Oats after Clover (13 *acres* 2 *roods* 20 *perches*).

													£	s.	d.
1918.															
Oct. 11	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	Ploughing		1	16	0
„ 12	3	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	6/-	„		2	14	0
„ 14	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6/-	„		1	16	0
„ 15	3	6/-	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	12	6/-	„		5	0	0
Nov. 2	1	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	3	6/-	„		1	7	4
„ 4	1	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	4	6/-	„		1	13	4
„ 5	1	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	4	6/-	„		1	13	4
„ 6	1	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	4	6/-	„		1	13	4
„ 7	1	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	4	6/-	„		1	13	4
„ 8	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	„		1	4	0
1919.															
Mar. 29	2	6/-	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	3	6/-	Drilling Oats		1	13	4
	3	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	6/-	Harrowing		3	0	0
											32 bushels Oats sown at 15/6 per bushel		24	16	0
May 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4/4	—	—	1 Guard, 5/-; digging docks, ½ day		0	6	10
„ 6	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4/4	—	—	„ „ „ ½ „		0	7	0
„ 10	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	4/4	—	—	„ „ „ 1 „		0	18	0
„ 12	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	4/4	—	—	... ...		0	13	0
„ 13	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	4/4	—	—	1 Guard, 5/-		1	2	4
„ 16	1	6/-	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	1	6/-	Horsehoeing		0	16	2
„ 21	—	—	—	—	7	4/2	—	—	—	—	Cutting Thistles		1	9	2
„ 22	1	7/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	Rolling, ½ day		0	6	6
„ 22	—	—	—	—	3	4/2	—	—	—	—	Spudding Thistles, ½ day		0	6	3
„ 22	1	7/7	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6/-	Rolling, ½ day		0	6	9½
„ 24	—	—	—	—	3	4/2	—	—	—	—	Spudding Thistles		0	12	6
													£57	4	6

TABLE 2 (*f*).

Beans after Flax (15 *Acres*).

													£	s.	d.
1918.															
Sept. ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Steam Cultivating twice at 9*d*. per acre each—4 men		2	5	0
	—	—	1	4/-	—	—	—	—	2	8/-	Water and Coal Cart		0	16	0
	—	—	1	3/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	Cook		0	3	0
Oct. 17	2	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	6/-	Ploughing Beans in		2	2	0
„ 18	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6/-	„ „		1	4	0
	1	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	6/-	„ „		0	18	0
	1	5/-	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	1	6/-	Carting Rubbish		1	7	0
„ 19	4	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	6/-	Ploughing Beans in		4	4	0
	2	5/-	—	—	3	3/4	—	—	2	6/-	Carting Rubbish		1	12	0
„ 21	4	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	6/-	Ploughing Beans in		4	4	0
	2	5/-	—	—	2	3/4	—	—	2	6/-	Carting Rubbish		1	8	8
	—	—	—	—	2	3/4	—	—	1	6/-	„ „ ½ day		0	4	8
„ 22	4	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	6/-	Ploughing in Beans		4	4	0
„ 23	4	6/-	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	6/-	„ „		4	4	0
„ 28	—	—	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	1	6/-	Harrowing		0	9	4
	—	—	—	—	1	3/4	—	—	1	6/-	„		0	9	4
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	40 bushels Beans sown at 25/- per bushel		50	0	0
1919.															
Apr. 23	—	—	—	—	1	3/9	—	—	1	6/-	Harrowing, ½ day		0	4	10½
„ 24	—	—	—	—	1	3/9	—	—	1	6/-	„ 1 „		0	9	9
May 21	2	6/-	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	2	6/-	Horsehoeing		1	8	2
„ 24	2	6/-	—	—	1	4/2	—	—	2	6/-	„		1	8	2
June 4	1	6/-	—	—	5	4/2	3	4/2	—	—	Weeding Beans, ½ day		0	9	11½
„ 5	—	—	—	—	5	4/2	—	—	—	—	„ „ 1 „		1	0	10
„ 6	2	6/-	—	—	5	4/2	1	4/4	—	—	„ „ ½ „		0	9	3½
													£85	6	0½

3.—*Profit and Loss Accounts on a farm varying from 4,150 acres to 2,700 acres for years 1911–1918.*

DR. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1911.* CR.

To Expenditure, viz :—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	*By Receipts* :—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Live stock—Horses ...	696 13 0		Live stock—Horses ...	0 15 0	
Cattle ...	1,714 1 6		Cattle ...	1,984 8 8	
Sheep ...	166 18 0		Sheep ...	1,398 7 6	
Pigs ...	—		Pigs ...	260 18 3	
		2,577 12 6			3,644 9 5
Labour		4,215 17 7	Produce—Wheat	1,148 9 9	
Materials and trade accounts		1,388 6 0	Barley	587 3 0	
Feeding stuffs, &c.		1,961 6 10	Oats	407 5 0	
Rent, &c.		1,741 0 0	Beans	194 0 0	
Manures		338 2 4	Hay, straw, etc.	482 15 0	
Plants, seeds, &c.		378 7 7			2,819 12 9
Rates		208 1 0	Hire of horses, &c.		1,132 17 3
Implements		226 3 6	Dairy produce		406 15 0
Valuations		393 1 8	Keeping and joisting		13 0 0
Carriage, &c. (freight)		86 4 10	Poultry		15 10 2
Stationery, fares, &c.		33 19 6	*Stock on hand*, April 6th, 1911, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation		18,784 12 10
Insurance		35 8 9	*Balance*, being Loss on year's working to Balance Sheet		2,983 7 7
Keeping and joisting		12 4 0			
Stock on hand, April 6th, 1910, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation		16,204 8 11			
		£29,800 5 0			£29,800 5 0

DR. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1912.* CR.

To Expenditure, viz. :—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	*By Receipts*, viz. :—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Live stock—Horses ...	£49 7 0		Live stock—Horses ...	£90 6 0	
Cattle ...	1,565 0 0		Cattle ...	2,438 18 4	
Sheep ...	482 8 0		Sheep ...	1,669 7 2	
Pigs ...	3 0 0		Pigs ...	322 3 2	
	2,099 15 0			4,520 14 8	
Labour	4,496 2 2		Produce—Wheat	2,343 0 3	
Materials and trade accounts	1,393 11 10		Barley	657 11 3	
Feeding stuffs	3,002 0 9		Oats	342 15 0	
Rent	1,771 10 0		Beans	479 3 0	
Manures	365 8 0		Hay, straw, &c	660 18 9	
Plants, seeds, &c.	445 4 10			4,483 8 3	
Rates	258 16 3		Hire of horses, tackle, &c.	1,051 1 11	
Implements	558 17 7		Dairy produce	404 3 11	
Stationery, fares	46 10 3		Keeping and joisting	2 12 0	
Carriage, &c. (freight)	207 16 2		Poultry	9 10 10	
Insurances	43 15 3		Tradesmen's accounts (refund)	3 5 0	
Keeping and joisting	56 5 0		Implements (discount)	2 0 0	
Poultry	1 4 6		Plants, seeds, &c. (discount)	0 9 4	
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.	3 10 0			10,477 5 11	
	14,750 7 7		*By Stock in hand* at April 6th, 1912, per Fox and Vergette's Valuations	18,918 0 10	
To Stock in hand at April 6th 1911, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation	18,784 12 10			29,395 6 9	
			By Balance, Loss on year's working carried to Capital Account for 1914	4,139 13 8	
	£33,535 0 5			£33,535 0 5	

DR. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1913.* CR.

To Expenditure, viz.:—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	*By Receipts:*—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Live Stock—Horses	—		Live Stock—Horses	2 15 0	
Cattle	289 5 6		Cattle	2,627 17 5	
Sheep	539 2 3		Sheep	1,073 5 5	
Pigs	14 14 0		Pigs	401 17 0	
		843 1 9			4,105 14 10
Labour		4,376 17 9	Produce—Wheat	1,703 1 6	
Tradesmen's accounts		1,078 6 8	Barley	388 9 6	
Feeding stuffs		2,571 14 7	Oats	346 10 0	
Rents		1,897 0 0	Beans	281 0 6	
Manures		227 13 0	Hay, straw, &c.	587 5 0	
Plants, seeds, &c.		576 15 0			3,306 6 6
Rates		266 13 6	Hire of horses, tackle, &c.		776 13 11
Implements		230 17 2	Dairy produce		393 3 4
Stationery, fares, &c.		42 2 7	Keeping and joisting		2 12 0
Carriage (freight)		42 8 10	Poultry		11 0 11
Insurances		53 6 9	Tradesmen's accounts (return on)		11 6 4
Keeping and joisting		26 0 0	*Stock on hand*, April 6th, 1913, per Fox & Vergette's Valuations		21,009 8 4
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.		5 5 0	*Balance*, being Loss on year's working to Balance Sheet		1,470 10 4
Bank charges		130 13 1			
Stock on hand, April 6th 1912, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation		18,918 0 10			
		£31,086 16 6			£31,086 16 6

DR. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1914.* CR.

To Expenditure, viz.:—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	*By Receipts:*—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Live Stock—Horses	68 3 0		Live Stock—Horses	138 6 0	
Cattle	2,320 2 4		Cattle	2,752 5 7	
Sheep	1,123 0 9		Sheep	2,665 1 8	
Pigs	8 8 0		Pigs	289 16 2	
		3,519 14 1			5,845 9 5
Labour		4,261 2 5	Produce—Wheat	1,019 11 6	
Tradesmen's accounts		1,026 14 4	Barley	481 14 0	
Feeding stuffs		2,251 18 0	Oats	440 2 6	
Implements		83 9 0	Beans	487 16 0	
Manures		550 12 9	Hay, straw, &c.	605 7 4	
Plants, seeds, &c.		437 5 0			3,034 11 4
Rates		299 13 10	Hire of horses, tackle, &c.		647 14 3
Rents		2,062 2 6	Dairy produce		372 2 1
Insurances		95 5 6	Keeping and joisting		2 12 0
Stationery, fares, &c.		62 14 1	Poultry		6 16 0
Carriage, &c. (freight)		107 3 0	Stationery, fares, &c. (fees returned)		0 15 0
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.		31 15 0	*Stock on hand*, April 6th, 1914, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation		23,671 6 4
Valuations		421 13 10	*Balance*, being Loss on year's working to Balance Sheet		2,875 9 2
Keeping and joisting		7 0 0			
Poultry		1 10 0			
Service fees		1 12 6			
Bank charges		226 1 5			
Stock in hand, April 6th, 1913, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation		21,009 8 4			
		£36,456 15 7			£36,456 15 7

Dr. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1915.* Cr.

To Expenditure:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock Horses	128	13	0			
Cattle	887	7	0			
Sheep	218	7	6			
Pigs	9	19	6			
				1,244	7	0
Labour				3 918	17	7
Tradesmen's accounts				969	5	4
Feeding stuffs				2,450	5	6
Implements				158	17	6
Manures				218	15	7
Plants and seeds				233	14	10
Rates				305	9	3
Rent				1,970	0	0
Insurance				97	0	9
Stationery, fares, &c.				58	9	10
Carriage, &c. (freight)				66	4	5
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.				11	5	0
Valuations				47	12	6
Keeping and joisting				85	7	6
Poultry				4	2	0
Service fees				27	10	0
Bank charges				205	2	4
Stock on hand, at April 6, 1914, per Fox and Vergette's valuation				23,671	6	4
Balance, being profit on year's working				1,389	0	3
				£37,132	13	6

By Receipts:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock—Horses	357	8	0			
Cattle	3,929	1	2			
Sheep	2,620	12	7			
Pigs	446	5	4			
				7,353	7	1
Produce—Wheat	3,846	7	6			
Barley	297	0	0			
Oats	407	17	0			
Beans	658	9	0			
Hay, straw, &c.	544	1	6			
				5,253	15	0
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.				859	0	5
Dairy produce				367	2	1
Keeping and joisting				2	12	0
Poultry				9	14	0
Implements sold				10	10	0
Valuations (tenant-right)				651	13	5
Stock on hand, at April 6, 1915, per Fox and Vergette's valuation				22,624	19	6
				£37,132	13	6

Dr. *Profit and Loss Account—Year ending April 6th, 1916.* Cr.

To Expenditure:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock—Horses	157	10	0			
Cattle	887	3	6			
Sheep	303	3	6			
Pigs	4	0	0			
				1,351	17	0
Labour				3,598	19	3
Materials and trade accounts				1,106	14	1
Feeding stuffs				2,179	17	9
Implements				830	11	11
Manures				1,401	16	8
Plants and seeds				228	15	7
Rates				295	13	8
Rent				1,835	0	0
Insurances				106	9	3
Stationery, fares, &c.				53	5	4
Carriage (freight)				59	3	4
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.				42	13	3
Keeping and joisting				8	0	0
Service fees				30	5	6
Bank charges				67	15	10
Peas (bought and resold)				25	18	4
				13,222	16	9
Stock on hand at April 6, 1915, per Fox and Vergette's valuation				22,624	19	6
				35,847	16	3
Balance (profit)				3,301	11	11
				£39,149	8	2

By Receipts:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock—Horses	725	11	0			
Cattle	4,612	16	10			
Sheep	3,099	17	0			
Pigs	612	2	4			
				9,050	7	2
Produce—Wheat	3,243	7	0			
Barley	577	10	0			
Oats	336	8	0			
Beans	597	1	0			
Hay, straw, &c.	396	1	1			
				5,150	7	1
Peas (bought and resold)				22	1	5
Hire of horses, tackle, &c.				523	5	11
Dairy produce				343	19	1
Keeping and joisting				2	12	0
Poultry				3	19	6
Implements sold				137	0	6
Valuations (Crosswayhand and Hallfield Valuation)				376	9	6
Plants and seeds				6	0	6
				15.616	2	8
Stock on hand at April 6, 1916, per Fox and Vergette's valuation				23,520	15	6
				39,136	18	2
Debts owing to farms at April 6, 1916				12	10	0
				£39,149	8	2

DR. *Profit and Loss Account—Year to April 6th, 1917.* CR.

To Expenditure:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock—Cattle	460	5	0			
Sheep	450	14	0			
Pigs	330	9	0			
				1,241	8	0
Labour				3,493	1	1
Materials and tradesmen's accounts				1,368	4	9
Feeding stuffs				2,319	11	7
Implements				696	1	11
Manures				1,390	8	3
Plants and seeds				924	6	7
Rates				207	0	1
Rents				1,242	18	9
Insurances				115	15	11
Stationery, fares, &c.				31	6	0
Carriage (freight)				64	17	3
Hire of horses, tackle, &c....				59	14	8
Service fees				7	7	6
Bank charges				26	16	4
Valuation fees				138	12	0
Military pay (Agricultural Company)				28	2	6
				13,355	13	2
To Stock on hand at April 6th, 1916, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation				23,520	15	6
				36,876	8	8
To Balance (profit)				3,790	12	4
				£40,667	1	0

By Receipts:—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Live Stock—Cattle	3,569	3	2			
Sheep	2,115	6	5			
Pigs	1,409	5	8			
				7,093	15	3
Produce—Wheat	4,030	17	11			
Barley	29	5	6			
Oats	454	7	9			
Beans	361	16	6			
Hay, straw, &c....	391	14	2			
				5,268	1	10
Hire of horses, tackle, &c....				251	6	3
Dairy produce				322	8	4
Implements sold				56	6	6
Valuations (Manor Farm, Woodnewton tenant right)				557	16	0
Feeding stuffs				125	5	0
Plants and seeds				196	7	7
Tradesmen's accounts (credits)				10	3	11
Military pay (Agricultural Company)				7	6	6
				13,888	17	2
By Stock on hand at April 6th, 1917, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation				26,640	6	9
				40,529	3	11
By Amounts owing to Farms at April 6th, 1917				137	17	1
				£40,667	1	0

Dr. *Profit and Loss Account for the year to April 6th, 1918.* Cr.

		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1917. April 6th.	*To Stock on hand* at April 6th, 1917, per Fox and Vergette's valuation... ...	26,640	6	9				
1918. April 6th.	*To payments for produce*, &c. :—							
	Live stock—Cattle £431 19 0							
	Sheep 735 7 0							
	Pigs 60 0 0							
	Horses 275 0 0							
		1,502	6	0				
	Labour £3,821 11 3							
	Less workmen's compensation claims refunded by the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Co. 2 5 0							
		3,819	6	3				
	Materials and tradesmen's accounts	1,347	4	7				
	Feeding stuffs	1,346	14	0				
	Implements	864	3	2				
	Manures	1,092	8	2				
	Plants and seeds	1,442	19	4				
	Rates	197	19	4				
	Rents £1,421 17 0							
	Less amount refunded by Estate account "B" for rent paid to J. Harris as a donation, December 25th, 1916 ... ... 25 0 0							
		1,396	17	0				
	Insurances	103	0	9				
	Stationery, fares, &c.	44	8	0				
	Carriage (freight)	89	15	3				
	Hire of horses, tackle, &c.	246	16	9				
	Service fees	2	1	6				
	Bank charges	10	4	4				
	Valuation fees	40	0	0				
		13,546	4	5				
	To Balance (profit) carried to balance sheet folio 20	2,385	19	6				
		£42,572	10	8				

		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1918 April 6th.	*By sales of Produce*, &c. ;—							
	Live stock—Cattle £2,426 1 9							
	Add amount owing at date ... 15 0 0							
		2,441	1	9				
	Sheep	2,174	14	7				
	Pigs £1,487 19 11							
	Add amount owing at date ... 8 6 3							
		1,496	6	2				
	Horses	1	17	0				
						6,113	19	6
	Produce—Wheat £1,895 6 10							
	Add amount owing at date ... 3 3 0							
		1,898	9	10				
	Barley £218 6 6							
	Add amount owing at date ... 92 11 2							
		310	17	8				
	Oats	223	6	10				
	Beans	718	1	0				
	Hay, straw, &c. £443 13 9							
	Add amount owing at date ... 8 15 6							
		452	8	9				
						3,608	4	1
	Hire of horses, tackle, &c....	438	0	1				
	Add amount owing at date	133	8	0				
						571	8	1
	Dairy produce					390	10	9
	Implements					27	0	0
	Keeping and agistment					9	16	0
	Valuation fee—							
	Refund by Estate account "B" for amount paid on behalf of that account last year					65	2	0
	Manures					56	6	7
	Feeding stuffs	35	11	8				
	Add amount owing at date	1	2	6				
						36	14	2
	Plants and seeds					6	6	3
	Coal					15	3	7
	Tradesmen's accounts (credits)					5	17	8
	Petrol rebate					11	14	0
	Service fees					3	3	0
						10,921	5	8
	By Stock on hand at April 6th, 1918, per Fox and Vergette's valuation ...					31,651	5	0
						£42,572	10	8

DR. *Profit and Loss Account for the year to April 6th, 1919.* CR.

1919.		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
April 6th.	*To expenditure* :—				*By receipts* :—			
	Live stock—Horses	—			Live stock—Horses	95	15	0
	Cattle	637	15	0	Cattle £7,579 0 5			
	Sheep	710	17	6	*Add* amount owing at date 15 0 0	7,594	0	5
	Pigs	406	12	0	Sheep £1,807 18 5			
	Bees	64	7	8	*Add* amount owing at date 8 6 3	1,876	4	8
	Labour £4,697 3 5				Pigs	1,554	8	7
	Less claims under Workmen's Compensation Act £15 11 4				Bees	9	7	6
	And amount owing at date 1 0 0				Produce—Wheat £3,916 10 7			
	16 11 4	4,680	12	1	*Add* amount owing at date 29 17 1	3,946	7	8
	Tradesmen's accounts	1,206	6	2	Barley	564	6	9
	Feeding stuffs	2,187	4	10	Oats	115	13	1
	Manures	1,169	19	4	Beans	15	7	6
	Plants and seeds	1,147	4	6	Hay, straw, potatoes, carrots, mangolds, &c. £1,277 14 9			
	Rates	204	1	6	*Add* amount owing at date 0 6 0	1,278	0	9
	Rents 1,471 9 5				Hire of horses, &c. £387 8 8			
	Less rent paid by allotment holders 2 10 0				*Add* amount owing at date 19 14 6	407	3	2
		1,468	19	5	Dairy produce	413	17	10
	Insurances £125 11 11				Keeping and agistment	127	11	0
	Less refund by Estate account "B" 2 8 4				Mustard	124	4	0
		123	3	7	Tares	70	4	0
	Stationery, fares	98	6	2	Flax	262	13	8
	Carriage freight £248 2 5				Peas	785	0	0
	Less refund carried of cattle sold at sale 100 2 6				Implements (credits)	5	0	0
		147	19	11	Tradesmen's accounts (credits)	11	10	3
	Hire of horses, tackle, etc.	96	7	8	Bank charges	9	2	9
	Implements	1,375	5	11	Manures	3	18	0
	Bank charges	55	5	5	Feeding stuffs	50	0	9
	Service fees	2	7	6				
	Keeping and joisting £13 15 0							
	Add amount owing at date 54 8 6							
		68	3	6				
	Stock on hand at April 6th, 1918, per Fox and Vergette's valuation	31,651	5	6	*Less* deduction on account of amounts owing to farms at April 6th, 1918	285	9	3
		47,502	5	2		18,994	8	1
	Profit	2,918	7	9	By Fox and Vergette's valuation at April 6th, 1918	31,426	4	10
		£50,420	12	11		£50,420	12	11

4. Balance Sheets on a farm varying in size from 4,150 acres to 2,700 acres for the years 1911–18.

Dr. BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1911. Cr.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz. :—							
Stock in hand, April 6th, 1910 ...	16,204	8	11	*By Valuation*, per Fox and Vergette—April 6th, 1911 ...	18,784	12	10
H. T. C Brassey—Advance ...	4,000	0	0	Loss per Profit and Loss Account ...	2,983	7	7
Overdraft at Bank—April 6th, 1911 ... 2,184 5 5							
Ditto —April 6th, 1910 ... 620 13 11							
	1,563	11	6				
	£21,768	0	5		£21,768	0	5

Dr. BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1912. Cr.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz. :—							
Stock in hand, April 6th. 1911 ...	18,784	12	10	*By Valuation*, per Fox & Vergette—April 6th, 1912 ...	18,918	0	10
H. T. C. Brassey—Advance ...	4,000	0	0	Loss per Profit and Loss Account ...	4,139	13	8
Overdraft at Bank, April 6th, 1912 ... 2,457 7 1							
Ditto. April 6th, 1911 ... 2,184 5 5							
	273	1	8				
	£23,057	14	6		£23,057	14	6

Dr. BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1913. Cr.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz :—							
Stock in hand April, 6th, 1912 ...	18,918	0	10	*By Valuation*, per Fox & Vergette—April 6th, 1913 ...	21,009	8	4
H. L. C. Brassey, Esq., Advance ...	2,000	0	0	Loss per Profit & Loss Account ...	1,470	10	4
Overdraft at Bank, April 6th, 1913 ... 4,019 4 11							
Ditto April 6th, 1912 ... 2,457 7 1							
	1,561	17	10				
	£22,479	18	8		£22,479	18	8

DR. BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1914. CR.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz. :—				*By Valuation*, per Fox & Vergette, at April 6th, 1914	23,671	6	4
Stock in hand, April 6th, 1913	21,009	8	4	*By Loss*, per Profit and Loss Account	2,875	9	2
H. T. C. Brassey, Esq., advance	4,000	0	0				
£ s. d.							
Overdraft at Bank, April 6th, 1914 ... ... 4,442 12 1							
„ „ „ „ 1913 ... ... 4,019 4 11							
	423	7	2				
Debt due to Estate Account for rent	1,114	0	0				
	£26,546	15	6		£26,546	15	6

BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1915.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz. :—				*By Valuation*, per Fox & Vergette, at April 6th, 1915	22,624	19	6
Stock in hand, April 6th, 1914	23,671	6	4	£ s. d.			
Profit, per Profit and Loss Account	1,389	0	3	Overdraft at Bank, April 6th, 1914 ... ... 5,556 12 1			
				Do. April 6th, 1915 ... ... 3,121 5 0			
					2,435	7	1
	£25,060	6	7		£25,060	6	7

BALANCE SHEET.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th*, 1916.

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.	*Assets.*	£	s.	d.
To Capital, viz. :—				*By Valuation*, per Fox & Vergette, at April 6th, 1916	23,520	15	6
Stock in hand, April 6th, 1915	19,503	14	6	Amount owing to Farmer at April 6th, 1916	12	10	0
Balance (profit)	3,301	11	11				
	22,805	6	5				
Barclay & Co.—							
Amount of overdraft	727	19	1				
	£23,533	5	6		£23,533	5	6

Balance Sheet.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th, 1917.*

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.
To Capital employed on the farm	22,792	16	5
Balance (profit) see account	3,790	12	4
	26,583	8	9
Barclay & Co. (Oundle) amount of overdraft	194	15	1
	£26,778	3	10

Assets.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Stock in hand, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation at April 6th, 1919				26,640	6	9
Amounts owing to Farms at April 6th, 1917, viz. :—						
Military Pay (War Office)	20	16	0			
Estate Account "A" for compensation repaid (L.L. & Globe) ...	3	3	4			
F. W. Holdich	18	18	0			
House Account...	94	19	9			
				137	17	1
				£26,778	3	10

Balance Sheet.—*Farming Account for year ending April 6th, 1918.*

Liabilities.	£	s.	d.
To Capital employed on the farm	26,583	8	9
To Balance (profit) see account, folio 19	2,385	19	6
	28,969	8	3
To Barclay's Bank (Oundle) overdrawn	2,947	6	0
	£31,916	14	3

Assets.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Stock in hand, per Fox & Vergette's Valuation at April 6th, 1918				31,651	5	0
By amounts owing to farms at April 6th, 1918, viz:—						
Estate account "A," for compensation repaid (Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company)	3	3	4			
Wherry & Sons	92	11	2			
J. McKean	63	0	0			
W. J. Harris	52	10	0			
F. Brown	23	6	3			
J. Leonard	14	5	0			
Lady Violet Brassey	8	19	6			
J. E. Quincey	4	11	0			
C. Blackett	3	3	0			
				265	9	3
				£31,916	14	3

5. SUMMARIES OF VALUATIONS

1914.

		Total Value.			Average per head.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
73	Horses	2,505	10	0	34	6	0
640	Beasts	8,975	0	0	14	0	0
1,962	Sheep	3,276	1	0	1	13	0
148	Pigs	326	13	0	2	4	0
	Implements	1,857	1	2			
	Threshing tackle, &c.	934	12	0			
	Poultry farm	254	1	0			
	Cultivations, seed, &c.	3,105	10	8			
	Cake and feeding stuffs	501	10	6			
	Artificial manure	273	6	1			
	Produce on hand	1,269	18	6			
		£23,279	3	11			

1915.

		Total Value.			Average per head.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
66	Horses	2,753	0	0	41	14	0
607	Beasts	8,594	0	0	12	10	0
1,714	Sheep	2,993	13	0	1	14	0
188	Pigs	476	17	0	2	10	0
	Implements	1,743	17	0			
	Cultivations	2,420	16	4			
	New road	200	0	0			
	Manure	61	2	0			
	Produce	1,273	12	0			
	Cake	591	6	3			
	Feeding stuffs	193	16	4			
	Artificial manure	213	5	1			
	Machinery	927	10	6			
		£22,444	15	6			

1916.

		Total Value.			Average per head.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
54	Horses	2,757	10	0	51	1	0
508	Beasts	7,378	15	0	14	10	0
1,137	Sheep	2,319	0	0	2	0	0
163	Pigs	385	10	0	2	6	0
	Implements	1,776	2	9			
	Cultivations and seeds	2,208	11	3			
	New Road	150	0	0			
	Produce and manure	3,556	3	0			
	Cake	561	14	1			
	Feeding stuffs	136	1	1			
	Artificial manures	390	2	4			
	Machinery	1,340	15	0			
		£22,960	4	6			

1917.

		Total Value.			Average per head.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
57	Horses	3,010	0	0	52	16	0
484	Beasts	8,685	0	0	17	18	0
1,085	Sheep	2,527	0	0	2	6	0
208	Pigs	694	0	0	3	6	0
	Implements	2,091	0	0			
	Machinery	1,311	0	0			
	Produce and manure	5,072	14	0			
	Cultivations, seed, and artificial applied	2,051	0	7			
	Cake—Feeding stuffs	461	0	0			
	Artificial manure—Roots	36	16	6			
	" " —Pasture	517	10	8			
	Draining	83	5	0			
	New Road	100	0	0			
		£26,640	6	9			

SUMMARIES OF VALUATIONS—*continued.*

1918.

	Total Value.	Average per head.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
67 Horses	3,812 0 0	56 17 0
486 Beasts	10,470 10 0	21 10 0
581 Sheep	2,778 0 0	4 15 0
171 Pigs	962 11 0	5 12 0
Produce	3,156 6 6	
Artificial manure	1,423 13 5	
Cake and feeding stuffs	180 8 0	
Draining	88 14 0	
Implements	2,305 19 0	
Machinery	1,358 0 0	
Cultivations, &c.	5,115 3 1	
	£31,651 5 0	

1919.

	Total Value.	Average per head.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
68 Horses	4,095 0 0	60 4 0
402 Beasts	8,032 0 0	19 19 0
1,140 Sheep	2,590 3 0	2 5 0
228 Pigs	1,234 11 0	5 8 0
Produce on hand	6,403 8 6	
Cultivation seeds, &c.	2,794 10 6	
Artificial manures	1,388 17 4	
Cake and foodstuffs	273 0 0	
Implements	2.403 5 6	
Machinery	2,087 0 0	
Draining	74 9 0	
New Road (part cost)	50 0 0	
	£31,426 4 10	

APPENDIX IV.

Handed in by Sir R. Winfrey, M.P., in connection with his evidence given on September 3rd, 1919.

Q. 8003. The price paid for oat seed was £1 3s. 9d.

Q. 8060. I have also reduced the estimated yield of barley by one quarter and put the market price at 90s. At the same time, I may add, in 1918 this tenant threshed out 5½ quarters to the acre and sold it at 70s.

Q. 8101. No charge was made for thatching the wheat because it is the invariable custom to thresh as soon as possible after harvest.

Q. 8119. I find, on enquiry, that the explanation of the charge of 4 cwts. basic slag and 1 cwt. ammonia is that the slag only was used in 1919. The ammonia was used in 1913. The smallholder, in 1919, took the advice of the "Farmer & Stockbreeder" and sowed the slag with his wheat.

Q. 8127–30. Regarding the cost of ridging raised by Mr. Overman, I find the smallholder estimates that he would do 3 acres a day, and another day for splitting, and he puts the cost at 5s. 6d. per acre in 1913 and 12s. in 1919. This I have corrected in the statement.

Q. 8154. The cost of seed in 1919 was 30s. 2d. per acre. *See* corrected statement.

Q. 8161. With regard to Norfolk, I was asked the size of the holding. I find it is 38 acres, 4 being grass, and the crops this year are as follows: wheat, 6 acres; oats, 6¾ acres, amongst which new seeds have been sown; barley, 7½ acres; mangolds and turnips, 8½ acres; old seeds mown twice, 5 acres.

Q. 8178. With regard to team labour, the Lincs. smallholder charged for one man and two horses 9s. per day in 1913, and 27s. 6d. in 1919. Manual labour in 1913, 3s.; in 1919, 7s.; harvest labour, 1s. 6d. per day.

Q. 8185. The smallholder bought his seed potatoes of a merchant at Spalding for £7 per ton delivered. They were second-grown Scotch and came from Gedney, 15 miles away.

Q. 8194. The cost of dressing the potatoes was 10s. 6d., and putting them on rail 7s. This should be added to the statement on page 200, and should come off the profit. The potatoes were delivered in April and May.

Q. 8199. I find I cannot give the actual cash received for the potato crop in 1913, but in 1914 40 per cent. of the potatoes were actually delivered in April and May, and the remainder were undelivered after the 30th June and the grower received the Government controlled price. He reckons the cost of re-dressing them amounted to 12s. 6d. a ton.

Q. 8204–8227. I find the smallholder is not able to tell me the actual cash he received for wheat in 1913; neither is he, I regret to say, able to give me a balance sheet.

Q. 8210. The explanation of this is that no artificial manure was used in 1913, but 3 cwts. was used in 1919 at a cost of £1 5s. 6d.

Q. 8224. The expense of getting the second crop of seeds was omitted; this should be: mowing, 5s.; making, 5s.; carting and stacking, 5s.; thatching, 2s.; total, 17s.

Q. 8251. Half a sack of seed used.

Q. 8255. I find that the explanation suggested by Mr. Ashby is a true one: that although the land was ploughed deeper, owing to it having been previously cleaned, the operation was less expensive.

Q. 8521. There are 30 resident tenants at Wingland, and 43 non-resident, making a total of 73. The largest holding there is 51 acres, and the smallest 2½.

APPENDIX No. V.

PAPERS SUBMITTED BY Mr. F. L. WALLACE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS EVIDENCE, 3rd SEPTEMBER, 1919.

Tillypronie,
Tarland,
Aberdeenshire.
23*rd August*, 1919.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for the consideration of the Royal Commission a suggested basis for correlating the wages to be received by the agricultural workman with the price which the farmer receives for his produce in such a manner as not to affect the farm workman's standard of living.

I have the honour to give the suggestion in the form of an excerpt from my Report on Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture in the County of Northamptonshire, already published in a Blue Book under that heading.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant.
(Signed) F. L. WALLACE.

The Chairman,
Royal Commission on Agriculture.

Excerpt from Mr. F. L. Wallace's Report upon Wages and Conditions of Employment in Agriculture in Northamptonshire, March, 1918.

Finally I would venture to suggest, for the consideration of the Agricultural Wages Board, the desirability of correlating the minimum wage of the future to the *cost* to the farm servant of certain alimentary commodities, and thereby correlate the wage to the selling price of farm produce. In an earlier section of this report, dealing with "the Attitude of the Farmer" towards the wages question, the writer drew attention to the danger which lies in fixing wages by Act of Parliament at a comparatively high level, owing to the uncertainty which lies in the future of profits upon farming the land. From the returns which the Board are now receiving in regard to agricultural workers' budgets, it should not be impossible to compute the quantities of the alimentary necessaries of life required by an agricultural working man and his family to live well. The suggestion is that the minimum wage should be made to rise or fall automatically correlatively to the prices of food stuffs, and thus, instead of the farmer being saddled with the payment of a certain wage to his men, whether the price he received for his produce enabled him to pay such a wage or not, as the price the farmer would receive for his produce would diminish, so, in approximate ratio, would the amount of wage diminish which he would have to pay to his men. Similarly, if the cost of food—such as meat, flour and sugar—rose, the wages would have to rise proportionately.

It would be necessary to this scheme that a portion only of the minimum wage as fixed by Act of Parliament should be ear-marked as covering the cost of alimentary necessaries of life, and only that portion of the wage would thus be liable to fluctuation. The remainder of the wage would thus be left unaffected directly by a rise or fall in the prices received by the farmer for the produce of his farm.

Supposing, for the sake of example, it were found that 40 per cent. of the wage is required by the labourer to purchase bread, milk, meat—in other words, farm produce—then it is suggested that this 40 per cent. of the wage should be governed by a sliding scale according to the prices which the farmer gets for his produce. The tithes rent charge might be taken as a basis. The remaining 60 per cent. of the wage should not be altered. If the price of foodstuffs fell it is probable that the prices of other things would fall somewhat, and in that case the purchasing power of the 60 per cent. would be increased. Under this arrangement if the farmer got less for his produce he would have to pay less wage to the labourer, but the labourer's standard of living would not be lowered thereby.

The prices of tea, sugar, and other imported articles should not affect the wage to be paid, as, if the prices of these articles fell, the farmer would himself get the benefit equally with other people.

Sir,

Having received a request from the Director of Investigations that I should present an *ad interim* Report upon the results of my recent investigations to date into farming costs, I have now the honour to present to you the attached *ad interim* Report, together with a Statement of Analysis in Tabular Form (Statement A).

I have the honour to be,
Sir.
Your obedient servant,
F. L. WALLACE.
Investigator to the Agricultural Wages Board.

28*th October*, 1918.
Sir Henry Rew, K.C.B.

Ad Interim Report upon Farming Costs.

In the Notes which I have presented to you from time to time, I have indicated a drift of mind towards certain conclusions. In my present Notes and in the Tabular Statement I have endeavoured to bring into prominence certain outstanding features based upon the upwards of 70 statements of account, balance sheets, and details of costs which I have already had the honour to present for your consideration from time to time, and which have been collected during the past few months in the Counties of Northampton, Oxford, Buckingham, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Northumberland, Durham, and the North Riding of Yorkshire.

It has been my endeavour to put before you, with two or three intentional exceptions, only statements of information collected from farmers who have been most carefully selected as being, in the general estimation of their neighbours and of the farming community generally, leading farmers whose ability and science place them in a prominent position of respect, and whose success or otherwise may be taken to be a fair criterion of the capabilities of farms and of farming of a similar character in the neighbourhood. At the same time, it has been the endeavour to include under review all classes and scales of farming in so far as time has been available for research up to the present.

It is to be presumed that Government cannot base a policy upon the results of poor farming, but only on the results of farming where the utmost has been produced by the means at the disposal of the farmer; the samples have been selected, therefore, from farms accordingly; and it should be borne in mind that the average English farmer would probably not be able to show such good results as those shown in the typical cases given.

While the farming community have been freely consulted in regard to the sources of information which should be tapped, and which could be regarded as representative, it is important to note that no farmer can be aware of which of his neighbours has supplied the statements of accounts presented for your inspection, unless the informant has made it known himself; for it is, and has been, and will be, a matter of honour with your investigator strictly to preserve the anonymity of each of the gentlemen who have so kindly, willingly, and patriotically given all the information at their disposal to help this inquiry. Similarly, every precaution is taken to disguise the locality of the informants' farms.

It is greatly to be regretted that some of the information collected, although of extreme interest to the inquiry, does not lend itself readily to statistical treatment, and, therefore, the tabular statement is hardly commensurate to the total of information collected.

Increase in Capital Values.—Endeavour has been made to distinguish between cash profits, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, such proportion of the balance sheet profits as are largely due to appreciation in the value of stock, or the equivalent of such stock, which was already on the farm upon the outbreak of war.

Broadly speaking, the capital invested in each farm has nearly doubled itself at to-day's valuations, as compared to pre-war valuations. The man who considered himself worth £3,000 in 1914 may consider himself worth about £5,250 to-day.

The figures for capital in the tabular statement, whether for 1914 or for 1918, should, in most cases, be regarded as approximate, but not absolutely accurate.

It is my suggestion that such increase in capital value should not be regarded as profit unless and until it is realised by the farmer going out of farming.

For the purposes of this Report and of the tabular statement presented herewith, in most cases only the *cash* profits, meaning the amount of cash taken out of or put back into the farm, have been considered in arriving at the return of interest upon capital or of profit made per acre. The increase in capital values is here to-day, but may be gone to-morrow, and I prefer to call it by the plain and ugly name of "Inflation of Capital Values," however such values may be based upon the market price of the moment.

Profits.—The cash profits have been good, especially during the years 1916 and 1917. At Christmas, 1917, was a period, lasting three or four weeks, when little fortunes were, in some instances, made, and, in most instances, farmers made, in that brief period, a most abnormal, exceptional profit in the fat stock market, which greatly influenced the results of many of the 1917–18 accounts. (*Vide* my Notes on Northumberland.) Discretion has, therefore, been used, since the object is to show fair average samples of farming costs and results, in not putting forward the more extreme 1917 results. Instances are known where as much as £50 profit per beast was made.

Recovery of Past Losses.—In my previous Notes it has been asserted that the best that any farmer has done during the war has been to recover a good part of the losses which he or his father before him made in the late '70's, '80's, and '90's. It has not been found possible to give proof of this assertion in statement form. Corroboration of the correctness of the view has been produced by executors in connection with the winding-up of estates, details of which your investigator is not at liberty to divulge. An instance is provided in the case of a farmer who was a careful book-keeper, and whose books showed, when the estate came to be wound up upon his decease, that during the '80's and the '90's he steadily lost ground, and he farmed then at a yearly loss. When the farmer very recently died, it was seen that by the time of his death he had exactly recovered, since the war and immediately previous to the war, the earlier losses, and his account was just squared. This farmer had the reputation of being an able farmer, and one who improved his land according to modern scientific methods.

Cash Profits put back into the Farms.—Attention should be drawn to the instances in which a large proportion of the profits made since the war have been put back into the farms in the form of higher manuring. Improvement has also been, in many instances, made in the quality of the live stock kept and dealt with, and these latter improvements cannot be seen in the accounts.

Superior Farming Methods of the Northern Counties.—Owing to the fact that it has in many instances not been possible to ascertain with sufficient accuracy to state for statistical purposes the amount of pre-war and post-war expenditure upon manures, although the improvement is sufficiently obvious to those who visit the farms, it has not been possible to confirm statistically the undoubted fact that the average farming methods in the Northern Counties of England are of a very much higher order than the average farming methods of the Midlands, especially in regard to the application of artificial manures.

Thus and many other points will be much more ascertainable in future, now that, owing to the exigencies of the Income Tax Collector, most farmers are learning to keep accurate books and to prepare balance sheets.

Output of Labour more Important than the Wage.—As a means of meeting the present high costs of farming, every farmer will support the thesis that output is of more importance than wage. I have yet to meet the farmer who complains of the present wage, provided that the hours are not too much meddled with.

Overtime Allowed does not necessarily imply that Overtime will be Worked.—It is important to note this fact, and the proof of it is found in what is taking place in some districts at the present time.

The Burden of Overtime Pay in Rainy Districts is very great. In some counties it is quite unusual to have more than a very few days of unbroken weather in the hay and harvest seasons. The hardship upon the farmers of having to pay overtime rates under such circumstances is obvious. As an example, take the Cumberland farmer. His farm is comparatively small. His men live in his house, and are, consequently, living at home. The men have perhaps next to nothing to do in the middle of the day owing to showers of rain and the hay being in cocks. In the evening a fresh wind blows and a bright sun shines. The farmer and his men rush out and lead hay. The farmer feels it a real hardship to have to pay overtime for an hour or two's work in the evening when he has deducted neither pay nor food for the comparatively idle time in the middle of the day. Hay or corn got under such conditions is necessarily a very expensive crop in a rainy county.

Comparison of Output in the Northern Counties and in the Midland and Southern Counties. A glance at the details of the examples already presented, together with the notes anent them, taken from various counties, shows the longer hours worked, the superior skill of the worker, the greater contentment of the worker, the higher pay of the worker, the far greater output of the worker—especially noting the number of workers per hundred acres—in the Northern Counties, as compared to the Midlands and South. The lower military recruitment and the consequent less substituted labour and the presence of very able women workers in Northumberland are points to be noted.

Away-Goings (and System of Payment of Rent in the North).—This system is of great importance. It enables farmers to take and to work larger farms than they could otherwise do with the capital at their disposal.

The custom in some Northern Districts of giving a running half-year for payment of rent has the same effect.

The system of allowing "a running half-year" for payment of rent—that is to say, six months' credit—is usually given: thus a man enters his farm at 12th May, and his first half-year's rent is *due* at 11th November, but, as a rule, is not collected till the following April or May, so that he has a year's sale before being called on to pay rent.

The custom of "away-going crops," under which the outgoing tenant puts in the crop and the entering tenant takes it over at valuation, but does not pay for it till it is realised, payment being made in two instalments, the first in January and the second in June succeeding entry.

These customs make the entry easier, as all a man requires, in addition to his stock, are a few hundreds to pay compensation claim, wages, and other necessary outgoings, until he begins to sell stock of crops to meet them. On a breeding farm, he probably begins to sell lambs in July, and his wool comes in about the same time.

The system, as already stated, enables a man to take a farm with less capital than he would otherwise do, but in many cases, it is to be feared, it induces him to take it with less capital than he ought to have, as, if he can scrape a little stock together, he trusts to selling something, or letting his "fogs" and turnips to pay his way for the first year. Thus the system has both its advantages and disadvantages.

Sheep Owned by Proprietors on some Hirsels.—This system enables men to take and work sheep farms with comparatively little capital.

Means of Paying Higher Wages in the North.—It will be seen under the foregoing headings that, if farmers in the North have always paid and are continuing to pay higher wages than in the Midlands and South, they have advantages in the North which go towards enabling them to pay them; and farmers further South have not these advantages.

Midland Grazings.—On the other hand, farmers on the rich Midland old grass farms have advantages which the Northern man has not got. There are strips of natural grazing in portions of the Midlands which, if only they were properly farmed, are unapproachable for the cheap feeding of cattle by anything to be found further North. The grazings in the North are made good by means, in the first instance, of the plough.

Rival Wages in Government Employment.—In the North labour is, on the whole, much less unbalanced than it is further South by the frequent neighbourhood of such work as for contractors for Government works, such as aerodromes and Road Boards, who pay such exorbitant wages as £2 per week to an undersized boy of 16 for shovelling sand, and £3 12s. per week and up to £5 per week for ordinary unskilled navvy work, with short hours. Such pay results is upsetting the balance of all labour in the neighbourhood, with the consequence that the output from the farmers' labour is much reduced.

The Comparative Uselessness of Estimates of the Costs of Producing given articles is obvious, except for purposes of comparison, to show the increases in costs of production now as compared to pre-war. However much the estimates may be based upon actual experience, they remain at best only estimates; and the estimates of costs vary immensely according to locality. A good many of such estimates have none the less been procured and have been duly presented for your inspection. For purposes of fixing prices to the farmer for his produce they would appear to be almost useless. The practical point remains that most farms are mixed farms; all the farmers' eggs are not in one basket. A minimum revenue off the farm is necessary to pay expenses, and so much more revenue is necessary to make such a profit as will make it worth the farmer's while to remain in business; and what the farmer loses on the swing he must gain on the roundabout, or he will not be able to carry on. No better illustration could be given than by examining what has happened during the present season on many Northern farms. Bumper crops of corn were grown, but, owing to continuous bad weather for six weeks, on some farms probably up to two-thirds of the oats and a large quantity of the barley has been shed; a considerable proportion of the potato crop on the heavier land has rotted; and the turnip crop, from the Southern Cumberland borders up to the northern coasts of Banffshire and Elgin and Nairn, is, on the whole, only sufficient to keep the breeding stocks and is insufficient to provide for feeding purposes.

Impossibility of Arriving at Profits Derived from Individual Sources on a Mixed Farm.—It has been found quite impossible to ascertain, from farming accounts, the proportions of earnings from the different sources of revenue. For this purpose one is compelled to fall back on estimates.

Prices for Farm Produce—Meat—Beef.—It scarcely seems to come within the legitimate scope of these *ad interim* Notes to do more than make a few passing remarks upon the extremely complex problems of adjustment of prices from time to time for farmers' produce.

While these Notes are being penned, a fresh announcement is made by the Food Controller in regard to meat prices to producers. Up to the present point it is, in the opinion of many farmers, only possible to make a profit on feeding for beef at recent levels of prices for beef and for stores if animals are bought young, as stirks, at the back end of the year, and are kept running on as stores through the following winter and summer and are fed off the second spring after purchase.

Mutton.—Recent prices for sheep seem to give reasonable satisfaction.

Milk.—Great harm was done to milk production, as well as to the reception of the minimum wage among farmers in certain counties, by the extremely unsatisfactory early summer price of milk to the farmer and by the delay in adjusting the price.

The recent price of milk appears to have given reasonable satisfaction to the milk producer who breeds and rears his own cows; but it is apparently impossible for the producer to avoid a loss on his production where the system followed is the town neighbourhood system of purchasing cows after their third calf, milking them out, and feeding them off fat after being milked out for, approximately, eighteen months.

In view of the clamour of the middleman and the retailer for full consideration for their interests, it is instructive to note cases of farmers who own a retailing shop for their milk. One case may be quoted of a farmer who is at the present time actually losing money upon the production of milk on the town neighbourhood system slightly modified, but who appears to be making up for his loss on production by his profit on retailing through his own shop in the neighbouring town. This farmer assures us that he has always made three times as much profit out of retailing his milk as he ever made by producing it.

Wool Prices give satisfaction at present levels. It calls, however, for a little patriotism on the part of the farmer to feel satisfied when a wool broker assures him that the War Office made 11d. a lb. profit out of the Cheviot wool which he produced.

Size of Farm Best Suited to Meet Higher Costs of Farming.—It will be remarked from perusal of the tabular analysis that, had the wages of 1917 or 1918 been paid in 1913 or in 1914, the corresponding reduction of profits in the latter years would have borne more hardly upon the medium-sized farms than upon the largest farms. In the case of the former, the pre-war profits would sometimes have been extinguished.

Quality of Farms and of Farming the Most Suited to Meet the Higher Costs of Farming.—It is not apparent from scrutiny of the tabular analysis, read concurrently with the careful description of each farm and farming system which has been given with each of the individual specimens of farming accounts already presented for your inspection, that it is either the specially good farms or the specially cheaply rented farms that have paid much better than the farms enjoying less advantages in the matter of soil and climate or than the higher rented farms. But it should be noted that the greater number of the farms in regard to which financial results have been given are the farms which have been improved by high-class farming, while the rents remain unchanged.

To one who has personally recently visited upwards of 100 farms in various parts of the country, it is obvious that the higher the quality and skill of the farming, the higher the profits. It is not possible to bring out this point in statistical form owing to the fact that in the majority of the cases taken the quality of the farming is the best provided by the neighbourhood on the style of farming described, and examples are seldom shown of the less skilfully and prudently managed farms. The difficulty of finding farmers whose books could form the basis of any statement of financial results, together with the care which had to be exercised in finding and selecting enough farms in the time allocated to the inquiry, which might be considered to be representative of all the different classes of farming in the district, precluded the making of as complete a survey for comparative purposes as it may be possible to make a year hence, when farmers will have learnt book-keeping, or will have improved their book-keeping methods, under the exigencies of making correct returns of the results of their farming business for Income Tax purposes.

From the tabular analysis, together with the individual descriptions of farms, one fact is apparent and stands out in bold relief—that is, the very severe handicap under which the tenant

of a very small farm labours if he has insufficient capital.

Improvement Possible over Present Methods of Farming on most Farms.—A good deal has been said in the foregoing remarks in regard to the superior methods of farming in most of the cases cited. There are few farms, however, on which further improvements to increase productiveness could not still be made; and it is greatly to the credit of farmers in general that, in most of the cases which have come under review, the farmers, as they recovered and increased their capital and became financially more independent than has been the case with them for very many years past, have turned their attention to making such improvements.

F. L. WALLACE.
Investigator to the Agricultural Wages Board.
28th November, 1918.

Statements "A" show actual ascertained results upon 54 farms. They also show what would have been the 1914 results if the wages paid to the 1914 staffs had been upon the official 1918 scales.

In several counties, notably in the Border Counties, the wages actually paid in 1918, and in many cases in 1917, were above the official minimum wages.

In the event of prices for farm produce falling to nearer the 1914 level than the present-day level, and if wages, which are a chief item among farming costs, do not fall in proportion, it is useful to see to what extent pre-war as well as the latest ascertained profits would have been affected if the present (May, 1919) wages had been paid in the respective years to the staffs actually employed in these years.

Statements "B" show this upon 45 farms out of the above 54 farms.*

Statement "C" shows the difference in percentages between the ascertained profits and what the profits would have been if the same staffs had been paid the latest wages.

Statement "D" shows in percentages the actual ascertained increases in capital during the war years on the 36 farms. It is important to differentiate between profit as shown by a balance sheet—which includes, of course, increase in capital as well as cash profit—and actual cash profit.

Statement "E" gives the total proportion of arable land, taking all the 54 farms dealt with together.

Statement "F" gives the number of men per 100 acres employed on the 36 farms.

The detailed statements from which the above-mentioned summaries are compiled are appended.* Except where otherwise especially mentioned, these statements were made by myself, and were based on figures extracted from the farmers' books by myself, with the farmers' assistance, and if the necessary clerical assistance and the time had been available actual balance sheets would more frequently have been submitted. In a few cases, chiefly among the smaller men, the *ipse dixit* of the farmers had to be accepted, but not before I had satisfied myself by investigation and cross-examination that the farmers' statements were approximately correct. A good many more statements of account could have been submitted if the pre-war bank pass book could have been analysed; but, unfortunately, in too many cases the pre-war balances were mixed up inextricably between business and private transactions.

* Not reprinted in this Appendix.

"A."—ACTUAL ASCERTAINED RESULTS.

TABLE No. 1.—"A." SERIES I.—OXON, BUCKS. NORTHANTS.

Acreage.	Description of Farm.	1914. Wages.	1914. Cash Profit (or Loss).	1914. Profit per Acre.	1914. Capital.	1914. Profit on Capital.	1918. Wages.	1918. Cash Profit (or Loss).	1918. Profit per Acre.	1918. Capital.	1918. Profit on Capital.	Profit (or Loss) in 1914 at present rate of wages, *i.e.* 1918 scale of wages.
		£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.
No. 1. 875 | 1914 715 | 1918	Mixed	1,565 12	349 7	7*s.* 11*d.*	11,500 0	3·0	2,345 10	475 5	13*s.* 3*d.*	13,500 0	3·5	Loss 430 11
No. 2. 385 ...	Mixed	299 11	552 12	£1 8*s.*	4,000 0	13·7	395 11	2,153 7	£5 12*s.*	5,000 0	43·6	Loss 456 11
No. 3. 270 ...	Mixed	—	—	—	—	—	569 2	321 19 (1917.)	£1 4*s.* (1918.)	2,743 15	13·5	—
No. 4. 385 | 1914 422 | 1918	Arable Sheep.	606 0	Loss 569 1 (Bal. 8ht. £30 19*s.* profit.)	—	4,500 0	—*	835 19	Loss	—	7,630 0	Loss	—
No. 6b. —	—	681 0	940 8	—	6,000 0	15·5	434 10	781 14	—	11,000 0	7·0	—
No. 7. 1,206 | 1914 1,506 | 1918	Mixed	—	1,473 0	£1 4*s.*	14,230 0	10·0	—	4,000 0	£2 13*s.*	25,314 0	16·5	—
No. 9. 470 ...	—	—	—	—	1916. 6,003 0	—	—	700 0	£1 10*s.*	8,318 0	18·0	—
No. 12. 198 ...	Mixed	251 16	411 17	£2 2*s.*	—	—	352 7	574 1 (Bal. Sht. £723 15*s.* profit.)	£2 18*s.*	—	—	—
No. 13. 478 | 1914 484 | 1918	Midland grazing. Pure feeding.	371 14	Loss 334 11 (Bal. Sht. £358 14*s.* profit.)	—	5,000 0	—	844 8	5,817 0	£1 4*s.*	5,000 0?	11·6	Loss 807 5
No. 5. 350 ...	—	917 19	32 13	1*s.* 10*d.*	—	—	1,059 2	58 1	3*s.* 3*d.*	7,355 2	·79	—
No. 10. 260 | 1914 319 | 1918	—	—	560 7	£2 3*s.*	3,000 0	18·7	—	617 0	£1 18*s.*	5,114 0	12·0	—
No. 11. 276 ...	—	325 2	314 13	£1 5*s.*	2,866 12	12·0	415 16	66 6	4*s.* 9*d.*	3,427 3	1·9	—

TABLE No. 2.—"A." SERIES II.—NORTHUMBERLAND.

Acreage.	Description of Farm.	1914. Wages.	1914. Cash Profit (or Loss).	1914. Profit per Acre.	1914. Capital.	1914. Profit on Capital.	1918. Wages.	1918. Cash Profit (or Loss).	1918. Profit per Acre.	1918. Capital.	1918. Profit on Capital.	Profit (or Loss) in 1914 at present rate of wages, *i.e.* 1918 scale of wages.
No. 21.		£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.
50 ...	Mixed	913 18	1,867 17 (£2,220 5*s.* Bal. Sht.)	£2 6*s.*	13,400 0	16·0	1,429 17	4,131 5 (£6,050 16*s.* Bal. Sht.)	£4 7*s.*	13,654 0	30·2	1,704 6
No. 22.												
1,000 ...	Feeding	892 8	1,200 0	£1 4*s.*	10,000 0	12·0	1,429 12	—	—	*17,000 0	—	663 0
No. 23.												Loss
1,000 ...	Breeding	650 0	Lived, no cash profit.	13*s.*	10,000 0	—	1,040 0	900 0	18*s.*	*17,000 0	53·0	390 0
No. 24.								(1916)				
500 ...	Feeding, mixed.	—	47 0	1*s.* 10*d.*	—	—	—	1,516 0	£3 1*s.*	—	—	—
No. 27.												Loss
286 ...	Feeding	183 17	75 0	5*s.* 2*d.*	4,000 0	1·8	267 12	300 0	£1 1*s.*	7,000 0	4·3	8 15
No. 28.												
5,500 ...	Hill sheep.	360 0	480 0	—	9,000 0	5·3	600 0	480 0	—	15,000 0	3·2	240 0
No. 29.												
400 ...	Feeding, mixed.	482 1	776 9	£1 19*s.*	4,523 0	17·0	704 8	1,315 6	£3 5*s.*	6,424 15	20·4	554 2
No. 32.												Loss
1,058 ...	Feeding, mixed.	1,111 0	236 0	4*s.* 5*d.*	5,500 0	4·0	2,222 0	7,545 0 Alternatively £6,000	£7 2*s.*	15,000 0	50·3	875 0
No. 33. Size of hirsel, 1360 ewes.	Hill sheep.	133 0	481 17	—	4,170 0	11·5	178 3	520 1	—	5,100 0	10·4	436 14

* This capital is assumed by Investigator, the farmer not having stated a figure. The figures for 1918 are based upon the assumption that the 1914 capital had increased by 70 per cent. in 1918.

TABLE No. 3.—"A" SERIES II,—CUMBERLAND, WESTMORLAND.

		£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.	£ s.			Per cent.	£ s.
No. 1.												Loss
190 ...	Dairy, mixed.	84 0	Lived, no cash.	—	*2,450 0	—	71 4	300 0	£1 11*s.*	£3,500	8·6	126 0 (about.)
No. 2.												
196 ...	Mixed	134 0	Lived, no cash.	—	1,700 0	—	258 12	375 0	£1 19*s.*	£3,400	11	—
No. 3.												
700 ...	Feeding, mixed.	292 12	831 0	£1 3*s*	10,669 0	7·7	509 12	2,900 0	£4 2*s.*	£16,535	17·5	614 0
No. 4.												Loss
300 ...	Dairy, mixed.	180 0	Lived. no cash.	—	3,592 0	—	220 0	1,500 0	£5	£5,356	28	100 0 (about.)
No. 5.								Loss				
350 ...	Mixed	213 16	86 0 (Bal. Sht. £222 0 profit.)	4*s.* 11*d.*	2,800 0	3·0	213 16	£392 (Bal. Sht £1,521 0 profit.)†	—	£3,430	—	—
No. 6.			Loss					Loss				Loss
200 ...	Mixed	260 12	455 14	—	2,486 17 valuation only.	—	306 0	£878 13‡ (Bal.St.)	—	£2,486 17*s.* valuation only.	Loss	641 0 (about.)
No. 7.												
394 ...	Dairy, mixed.	257 8	600 0	£1 10*s.*	4,000 0	15·0	487 0	900 0	£2 5*s.*	*£6,800	13	494 4
No. 8.												
140 ...	Dairy, mixed.	84 0	80 0	11*s.* 5*d.*	1,500 0	5·3	70 0	150 0	£1 1*s.*	£2,500	6	20 0
No. 9.												
365 ...	Mixed	177 12	200 0	10*s.* 11*d.*	2,800 0	7·0	375 18	800 0	£2 4*s.*	£5,000	16	1 14
No. 11.												
184 ...	Mixed	—	50 0	5*s.* 5*d.*	750 0	6·6	3 10	84 0	9*s.* 1*d.*	£900	9	—
No. 12.												
50½ ...	Mixed	19 2	20 0	8*s.*	220 0	9·0	30 0	20 0	8*s.*	£280	7·1	10 0
No. 13.												Loss
101 ...	Mixed	17 0	Lived, no cash.	—	800 0	—	68 0	40 0	8*s.* 11*d.*	£1,600	2·5	51 0
No. 14.												Loss
310 ...	Feeding	178 0	200 0	12*s.* 10*d.*	3,000 0	6·6	332 0	Loss	—	£5,000	Loss	96 0
No. 16.												
2,795 ...	Hill sheep.	68 0	300 0	—	2,000 0	15·0	—	600 0	—	*£3,400	17·6	212 0
No. 17.												
400 ...	Mixed	286 6	350 0	17*s.* 6*d.*	4,500 0	7·7	339 4	850 0	£2 2*s.*	*£9,500	8·9	243 0

* This capital is assumed by Investigator, the farmer not having stated a figure. The figures for 1918 are based upon the assumption that the 1914 capital had increased by 70 per cent. in 1918.

† This Balance Sheet Profit is entirely due to appreciation of Stock.

‡ This figure should read £378 13*s.*

TABLE No. 4.—"A." SERIES III.—DURHAM AND YORKSHIRE (North Riding).

Acreage.	Description of Farm.	1914.					1918.					Profit (or Loss) in 1914 at present rate of wages, *i.e.* 1918 scale of wages.
		Wages.	Cash Profit (or Loss).	Profit per Acre.	Capital.	Profit on Capital.	Wages.	Cash Profit (or Loss).	Profit per Acre.	Capital.	Profit on Capital.	
		£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.	£ s.		£ s.	Per cent.	£ s.
No. 1. 400 ...	Mixed	819 0	350 0	17*s.* 6*d.*	3,500 0	10·0	1,042 0	1,200 0	£3	5,500 0	21·8	Loss 183 0
No. 2. 131 ...	Mixed	32 0	30 0	4*s.* 6*d.*	600 0	5·0	30 0	600 0	£4 11*s.*	1,000 0	60·0	32 0
No. 3. 111 ...	Mixed	—	Lived, no cash.	—	450 0	—	—	Lived, no cash.	—	784 0	—	—
No. 4. 1,600 ...	Hill sheep.	294 9	737 11	—	2,206 0 Stock only.	—	210 19	811 1 (Bal. Sht. £820. 3*s.* profit).	—	2,157 10 Stock only.	—	731 0
No. 5. —	Dairy, mixed.	751 2	1,262 0 (Bal. Sht. £1,485 9*s.* profit).	—	4,307 4	29·3	1,082 8	711 13 (Bal. Sht. £1,583 2*s.* profit).	—	8,046 16	19·6	931 0
No. 6. 1,400 ...	Feeding	641 4	861 11 (Bal. Sht. £1,500 8*s.* profit).	£1 1*s.*	6,039 0	14·2	968 18	1,403 13 (Bal. Sht £2,247 7*s.* profit).	£1 12*s.*	7,417 2	18·9	204 11
No. 7. 390 ...	Arable, feeding.	600 0	100 0	5*s.* 1*d.*	3,900 0	2·5	900 0	1,000 0	£2 6*s.*	7,800 0	12·8	Loss 200 0
No. 8. 323 ...	Mixed	413 10	125 3	7*s.* 8*d.*	6,097 14	20·5	690 4	1,512 2	£4 14*s.*	9,460 8	16·0	Loss 51 11
No. 9. 96 ...	Mixed (small).	43 15	50 0	10*s.* 5*d*	750 0	6·6	20 10	70 0	14*s.* 7*d.*	1,500 0	8·0	—
No. 10. 685 ...	Sheep	99 8	100 0	2*s.* 11*d.*	2,100 0	4·7	82 10	200 0	5*s.* 10*d.*	4,200 0	4·7	90 8
No. 11. 110 ...	Hill sheep.	40 0	227 10	—	2,286 0	9·9	—	427 6	—	4,000 0	4·7	207 10
No. 11a. 41 ...	Hill sheep.	18 0	Lived, no cash.	—	356 10	—	7 0	50 0	—	792 0	10·6	—
No. 12. 280 ...	Feeding	288 0	200 0	14*s.* 3*d.*	2,500 0	8·0	530 0	400 0	£1 8*s.*	4,100 0	6·3	31 0
No. 13. —	Hill sheep.	204 9	537 6	—	2,785 18	19·0	—	—	—	—	—	—
No. 16. 220 ...	Mixed	131 0	200 0	18*s.* 2*d.*	3,500 0	5·7	118 16	800 0	£3 13*s.*	6,000 0	13·3	149 0
No. 17. 260 ...	Mixed	314 0	150 0	11*s.* 6*d.*	2,300 0	6·5	495 0	560 0	£1 18*s.*	4,550 0	10·9	Loss 31 0
No. 24. 224 ...	Feeding	101 8	275 16	£1 5*s.*	3,250 0	8·5	207 0	1,025 15	£4 12*s.*	4,940 0	20·7	170 4
No. 25. 2,600 ...	Hill sheep.	188 9	534 6	—	3,587 11	14·8	293 17	1,041 16	—	5,697 13	18·2	466 4

Note.—In regard to the so-called capital in 1918, where the capital amounts to simply the double of what it was in 1914, it indicates a disposition on the part of the farmer to guess at his capital increase, owing to valuations not having been made in many cases. Doubling the pre-war capital is rather too much. On the average, an increase of ⅔ or ¾ as much capital again, say an increase of 70 per cent. in 1918 upon what it was in 1914 is probably near the mark.

"C."—STATEMENT SHEWING THE DIFFERENCE, IN PER CENT. AND PER ACRE, IN T PROFITS UNDER THE TWO SCALES OF WAGES, THE RESULTS BEING SHEWN FOR WHOLE GROUPS

CASH PROFITS.

—	*Series I.* Oxon, Bucks, Northants.		*Series II.* Cumberland, Westmoreland.		*Series II.* Northumberland.		*Series III.* Durham and Yorkshire.	
	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
1914	10·5	5·2	8·3	6·1	9·2	5·0	11·0	10·0
1918	16·2	22·0	12·4	8·9	18·4	14·1	17·1	15·3
	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.	Per acre.
1914	£1 5*s.* 8*d.*	9*s.* 4*d.*	13*s.* 9*d.*	9*s.* 5*d.*	£1 0*s.* 0*d.*	11*s.* 0*d.*	10*s.* 7*d.*	3*s.* 3*d.*
1918	£2 4*s.* 4*d.*	£2 12*s.* 0*d.*	£1 19*s.* 0*d.*	£1 10*s.* 0*d.*	£3 16*s.* 9*d.*	£2 9*s.* 0*d.*	£2 13*s.* 0*d.*	£2 17*s.* 0*d.*

TOTAL FOR SERIES, I, II, III.

	Old Rate of Wage.		New Rate.	
1914	9·7 per cent.	17*s.* 6*d.* per acre	6·5 per cent.	8*s.* 3*d.* per acre.
1918	16·0 „	£2 13*s.* 4*d.* „	15·1 „	£2 7*s.* 0*d.* „

—	Farms 100 acres and under included above.		Farms 50 acres and under included above.	
	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.	Old Rate of Wage.	New Rate.
1914	6·6 per cent.	20·1 per cent. loss.	9·0 per cent.	27·0 per cent. loss
1918	8·0 „	1·1 „ „	7·1 „	1·4 per cent. profit
1914	1*s.* 5*d.* per acre.		8*s.* 0*d.* per acre.	
1918	14*s.* 7*d.* „		8*s.* 0*d.* „	

Note.—In obtaining above results interest is almost invariably ignored ; the profits (*cash* profits) being regarded as interest.

Note.—Only results from four farms of 100 acres and under and from two farms of 50 acres and under are shown.

"D."—STATEMENT SHOWING CAPITAL INCREASES IN WHOLE GROUP.

CAPITAL INCREASE.

SERIES I.—OXON, BUCKS, NORTHANTS.

Example :—		Example :—		Example :—	
No. 1	17·4 per cent.	No. 6	83·3 per cent.	No. 10	70·4 per cent.
„ 2	25·0 „	„ 7	73·5 „	„ 11	19·5 „
„ 4	69·5 „	„ 9	38·5 „		

Average ... ... 50·3 per cent.

SERIES II.—CUMBERLAND, WESTMORELAND.

Example :—		Example :—		Example :—	
No. 2	100·0 per cent.	No. 8	66·6 per cent.	No. 13	100·0 per cent.
„ 3	54·9 „	„ 9	44·0 „	„ 14	66·6 „
„ 4	49·1 „	„ 11	20·0 „		
„ 5	22·5 „	„ 12	27·2 „		

Average ... ... 54·9 per cent.

SERIES II.—NORTHUMBERLAND.

No. 21	1·8 per cent.	No. 28	66·6 per cent.	No. 32	163·6 per cent.
„ 27	75·0 „	„ 29	41·8 „	„ 33	22·2 „

Average ... ... 61·8 per cent.

SERIES III.—DURHAM AND YORKSHIRE.

No. 1	57·1 per cent.	No. 7	100·0 per cent.	No. 12	64·0 per cent.
„ 2	50·0 „	„ 8	55·0 „	„ 16	71·4 „
„ 3	74·2 „	„ 9	100·0 „	„ 17	97·8 „
„ 5	87·0 „	„ 10	100·0 „	„ 24	51·1 „
„ 6	22·8 „				

Average ... ... 71·5 per cent.

Total Proportion of Arable in Series I., II. and III. combined .. ... 25·6 per cent.

"E."—HILL SHEEP TREATED SEPARATELY AND NOT INCLUDED ABOVE.

	Old Statement.	New Statement.	Profit.
1914	12·6 per cent. ...	9·5 per cent. ...	per cent.
1918	11·8 „ ..	12·0 „ ...	„
Increase in Capital		87·4 per cent.	

"F."—PERCENTAGE OF LABOUR (PRE-WAR) PER 100 ACRES.

Series I.—Oxon, Bucks, Northants.

No. 1	4 per 100 acres	(4 men).	No. 6B ... ... 2 per 100 acres (2 men).
„ 2	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	„ 8 ... ... 6 „ „ „ (5 men, 1 boy)
„ 3	4 „ „ „	(4 men).	„ 12 ... ... 4 „ „ „ (3 men, 1 boy).
„ 4	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	

Average ... ... 3 per 100 acres.

Series II.—Cumberland, Westmoreland.

No. 1	3 per 100 acres	(2 men, 1 boy).	No. 8 ... ... 3 per 100 acres (3 men).
„ 2	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	„ 9 ... ... 1 „ „ „ (1 man).
„ 3	1 „ „ „	(1 man).	„ 11 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (1 man, 1 woman).
„ 4	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	„ 12 ... ... 4 „ „ „ (4 men).
„ 5	1 „ „ „	(1 man).	„ 13 ... ... 3 „ „ „ (1 man, 1 boy, 1 girl).
„ 6	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	„ 14 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).
„ 7	1 „ „ „	(1 man).	„ 17 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).

Average ... ... 2 per 100 acres.

Series II.—Northumberland.

No. 21	2 per 100 acres	(2 men).	No. 27 ... ... 1 per 100 acres (1 man).
„ 22	2 „ „ „	(1 man, 1 girl).	„ 29 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).
„ 23	2 „ „ „	(2 men).	

Average ... ... 2 per 100 acres.

Series III.—Durham and Yorkshire.

No. 1	7 per 100 acres	(3 men, 4 women).	No. 8 ... ... 4 per 100 acres (3 men, 1 woman).
„ 2	2 „ „ „	(1 man, 1 woman).	„ 9 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).
„ 3	4 „ „ „	(2 men, 2 women).	„ 12 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).
„ 6	1 „ „ „	(1 man).	„ 16 ... ... 2 „ „ „ (2 men).
„ 7	4 „ „ „	(2 men, 2 women).	„ 24 ... ... 3 „ „ „ (3 men).

Average ... ... 3 per 100 acres.

Note.—In working out these figures for each series, as most of them come to a decimal figure, I have taken each one to the nearest whole number.

Note.—It is the opinion of many good farmers, and an opinion which is shared by the writer, that the ideal number of men for first-class farming on an average mixed farm of grass and arable anywhere in the midlands of England, would be four men per every 100 acres, or at least three men and a boy. This rule may apply to any average county in England where labour conditions and/or labour output of work are not exceptional. It is interesting to note, therefore, the percentages of labour employed upon the 45 farms (pre-war) from which a return of 1914 profits has been made.

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